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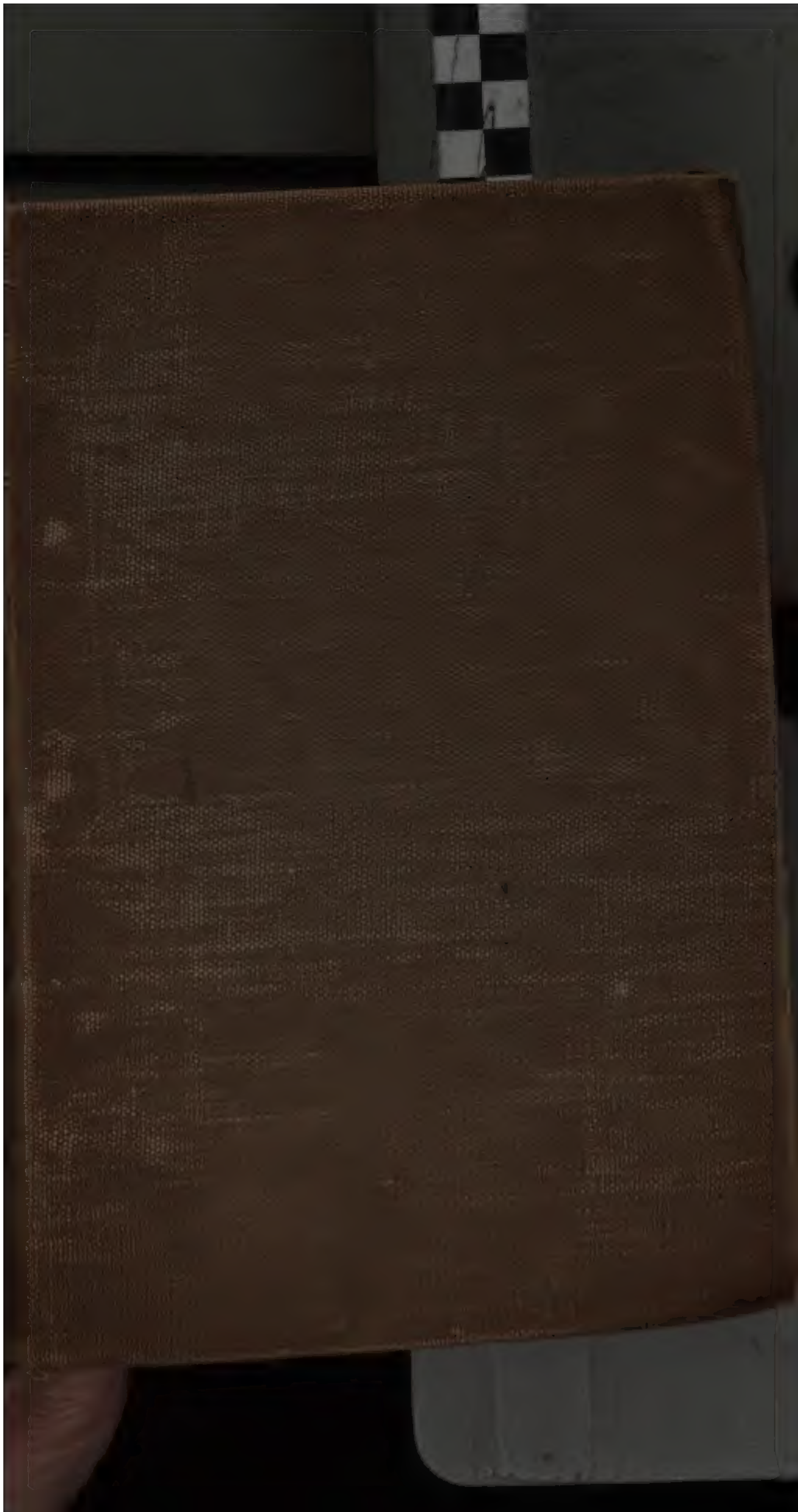
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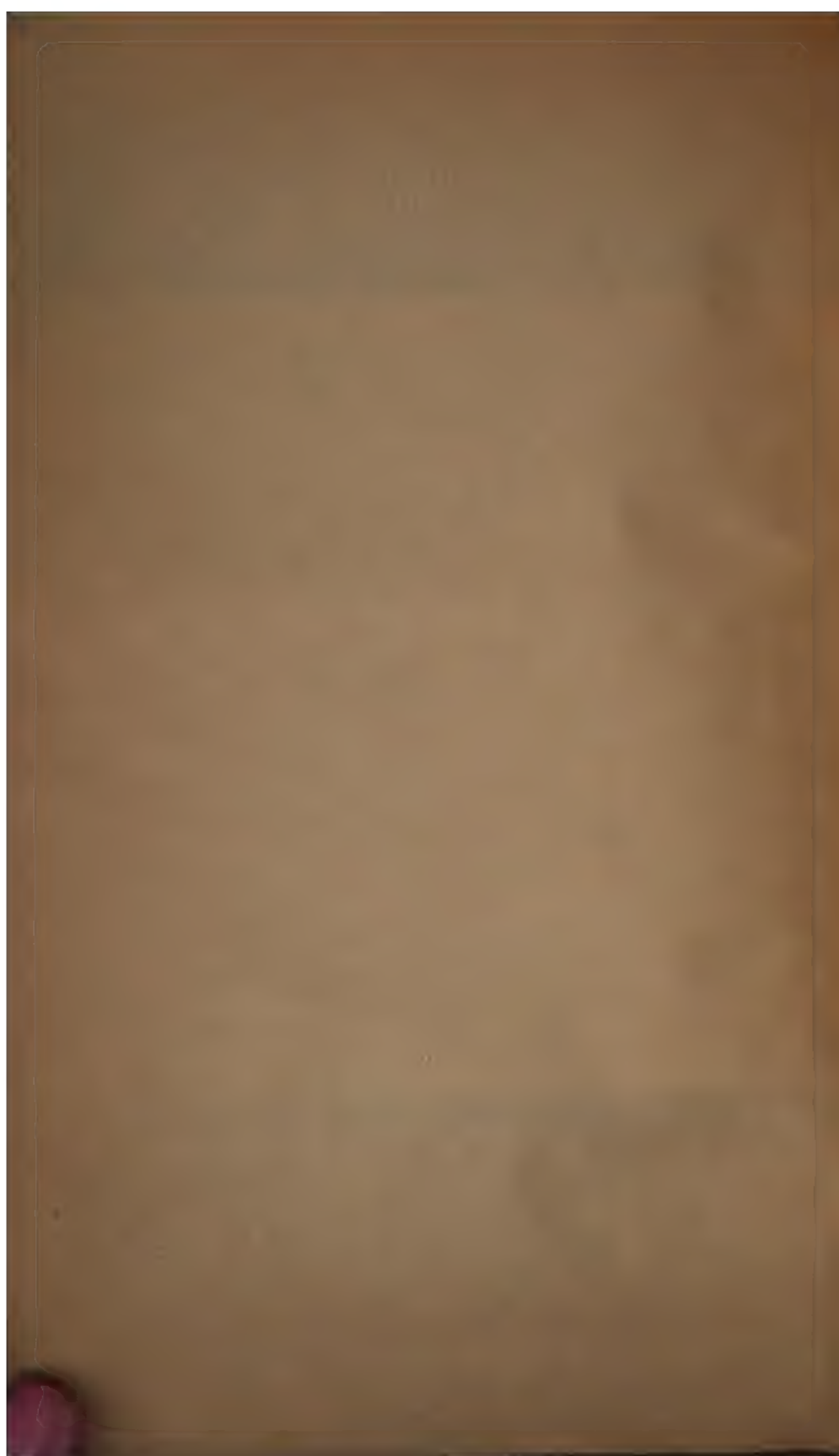
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Carlyle



irregular exactions which were levied under the Ameers, and are now put an end to, was the virtual impossibility of procuring timber fit to build good boats. In the lower half of the Indus, the usual boat is one of seventy-five tons burthen; this large craft was built of the miserable unseasoned wood which grows on the banks, and in one keel planks of every variety of species and size might be observed. The best material, the teak of western India, was prohibited to the humble boatmen of the Indus by its dearness; but the opening of the river, the removal of transit-duty and the commercial activity which may be expected, will remove this and many other inconveniences. The greatest immediate benefit will accrue to the Punjab, whose grain, cotton and indigo will find an outlet which has hitherto not practically existed to any great extent. Bombay will become an entrepôt for goods destined for the Punjab and central Asia, to a far greater amount than has hitherto been the case, as long as those countries remain at peace. But it is in a military view that the Indus is invaluable. The command of it by a steam flotilla, and the position on the flank of an invader marching to Delhi which would be held by an army in Sind, are ample securities against the latter contingency ever occurring. These advantages have never been possessed by any former rulers of India, and, in the event of an invasion, would cause it to terminate in a very different manner from those which have hitherto taken place. The chief disadvantage of possessing Sind is, that it attaches us permanently to the new system of intimate foreign relations which had been created by the Affghan war. It will at the same time extend our influence through central Asia and anticipate the plans imputed to Russia, but it is as yet very doubtful if the increase of influence will counterbalance the liability to war and other interference, which the permanence of our new connexion may entail. The rich plans of Cutch Gundâva, which are possessed by the tribes of Beloochistan, are so easily commanded by troops stationed in Sind, that our influence over that principality can, by able management, be peaceably and securely retained; but the hill tribes on the northern frontiers know by experience that, aided by their mountains, they can repel a British force. The neighbouring parts of Sind lie open to their bands of plunderers, to whom their fastnesses afford a

secure refuge. We may thus become engaged in constant petty hostilities, a Caucasus on a small scale, if offensive operations are attempted; but a strong mounted police and activity in the pursuit and punishment of marauders, will probably suffice to repress the evil.

The general effect of the possession of Sinde on our foreign relations is, that from being almost exclusively an Indian power, England becomes, equally with Russia, an Asiatic power, with greater military means than Russia of pouring troops into central Asia for aggressive operations, and, for defensive measures, with a frontier so constructed as to render one false step fatal to an invading army. We trust that time will render neither necessary.

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#### ARTICLE VII.

1. *Six Lectures on Heroes and Hero Worship.* By THOMAS CARLYLE. London: Fraser, 1841.
2. *Sartor Resartus*: in Three Books. By THOMAS CARLYLE. London: Fraser, 1841.
3. *Past and Present.* By THOMAS CARLYLE. London: Chapman and Hall, 1843.

WE gladly take the opportunity offered by the publication of a new work by Mr. Carlyle, to express our opinion of this remarkable writer. We say, our opinion of the writer,—of his genius and tendencies, rather than of his books,—of the idea which inspires him, rather than of the form with which he chooses to invest it. The latter in truth is of far less importance than the former. In this period of transition from doubt to aspiration, this “sick and out-of-joint” time, old ideas die away, or weigh upon the heart like midnight dreams: young ones spring up to view, bright-coloured and fresh with hope, but vague and incomplete, like the dreams of the morning. We stand wavering between a past whose life is extinct, and a future whose life has not yet begun; one while discouraged, at another animated by glorious presentiments, looking through the clouds for some star to

guide us. One and all, like Herder, we demand of the instinct of our conscience, a great religious thought which may rescue us from doubt, a social faith which may save us from anarchy, a moral inspiration which may embody that faith in action and keep us from idle contemplation. We ask this especially of those men, in whom the unuttered sentiments and aspirations of the multitudes are concentrated and harmonized with the highest intuition of individual conscience. Their mission changes with the times. There are periods of a calm and normal activity, when the thinker is like the pure and serene star which illumines and sanctifies with its halo of light that *which is*. There are other times, when genius must move devotedly onward before us, like the pillar of fire in the desert, and fathom for us the depths of that which *shall be*. Such are our times: we cannot at the present day merely amuse ourselves with being *artists*, playing with sounds or forms, tickling only our senses, instead of pondering some germ of thought which may save us. We are scarcely disposed, living in the nineteenth century, to act like that people mentioned by Herodotus, who beguiled eighteen years of famine by playing with dice and tennis-balls.

The writer with whom we have now to deal, by the nature of his labours and the direction of his genius, authorizes the examination we propose to make. He is melancholy and grave: he early felt the evil which is now preying upon the world, and from the outset of his career he proclaimed it loudly and courageously.

"Call ye that a society," he exclaims, in one of his first publications, "where there is no longer any social idea extant, not so much as the idea of a common home, but only of a common over-crowded lodging-house? where each, isolated, regardless of his neighbour, turned against his neighbour, clutches what he can get, and cries '*Mine!*' and calls it Peace, because in the cut-purse and cut-throat scramble, no steel knives, but only a far cunninger sort can be employed—where friendship, communion, has become an incredible tradition, and your holiest sacramental supper is a smoking tavern dinner, with cook for evangelist? where your priest has no tongue but for plate-licking, and your high guides and governors cannot guide; but on all hands hear it passionately proclaimed, *Laissez-faire!* Leave us alone of your guidance—such light is darker than darkness—eat your wages, and sleep\*."

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\* Sartor Resartus, Book iii. chap. 6.

Mr. Carlyle, in writing these lines, was conscious that he engaged himself to seek a remedy for the evil, nor has he shrunk from the task. All that he has since written bears more and more evidently the stamp of a high purpose.. In his 'Chartism' he attempted to grapple with the social question; in all his writings, whatever be their subject, he has touched upon it in some one of its aspects. Art is to him but as a means. In his vocation as a writer he fills the tribune of an apostle, and it is here that we must judge him.

There is a multitude around him; and this is the first fact to establish, for it speaks both in favour of the writer and of the public whom he has won over. Since the day when, alone and uncomprehended, he penned the words which we have quoted, Teufelsdröck has made proselytes. The "mad hopes," expressed, with an allowable consciousness of the power which stirred within him, in the last chapter of 'Sartor Resartus,' have been largely realized. The philosophy of clothes—thanks to the good and bad conduct of the two Dandiacal and Drudge sects—has made some progress. Signs have appeared; they multiply daily on the horizon. The diameter of the two "bottomless, boiling whirlpools\*," has widened and widened, as they approach each other in a threatening manner; and many readers who commenced with a smile of pity, or scorn of the unintelligible and tiresome jargon, the insinuations, half-ironical half-wild, of the dark dreamer, now look into his pages, with the perseverance of the monks of Mount Athos, to see whether they cannot there discover the "great thought," of which they themselves begin to feel the want. They now admire as much as they once scorned,—they admire even when they cannot understand.

Be it so, for this too is good: it is good to see that the great social question, which not long ago was ridiculed, begins to exercise a kind of fascination upon the public mind; to find that even those whose own powers are not adequate to the task, acknowledge the necessity of some solution of the sphinx-like enigma which the times present. It is good to see, by a new example, that neither ignorant levity nor mate-

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\* Sartor Resartus, Book iii. chap. 10.

rialist indifference can long suppress the divine rights of intellect.

There are differences between Mr. Carlyle's manner of viewing things and ours, which we have to premise; but we will not do this without first avowing his incontestable merits,—merits which at the present day are as important as they are rare, which in him are so elevated as to command the respect and admiration even of those who rank under another standard, and the sympathy and gratitude of those who, like ourselves, are in the main upon the same side, and who differ only respecting the choice of means and the road to pursue.

Above all, we would note the sincerity of the writer. What he writes, he not only thinks, but feels. He may deceive himself,—he cannot deceive us; for what he says, even when it is not the truth, is yet *true*,—*his* individuality, *his* errors, *his* incomplete views of things,—realities, and not nonentities,—the truth limited, we might say, for error springing from sincerity in a high intellect is no other than such. He seeks good with conscientious zeal, not from a love of fame, not even from the gratification of the discovery; his motive is the love of his fellow-men, a deep and active feeling of duty, for he believes this to be the mission of man upon earth. He writes a book, as he would do a good action. Yet more, not only does he feel all that he writes, but he writes nearly all that he feels. Whatever is in his thoughts and has not yet been put on paper, we may be sure will sooner or later appear. He may preach the merit of “holding one's tongue;” to those, in truth, who do not agree with him, are such words addressed; but the “talent of silence” is not his: if sometimes he pretend to reverence it, it is as we may say platonically,—to prevent others speaking ill. But in minds constituted as his, compression of thought is impossible; it must expand, and every prolonged effort made to restrain it will only render the explosion the more violent. Mr. Carlyle is no homœopathist; he never administers remedies for evil in infinitesimal doses; he never pollutes the sacredness of thought by outward concessions or compromise with error. Like Luther, he hurls his inkstand at the head of the devil, under whatever form he shows himself, without looking to

the consequences; but he does it with such sincerity, such *naïveté* and good-will, that the devil himself could not be displeased at it, were the moment not critical, and every blow of the inkstand a serious thing to him. We know no English writer who has during the last ten years so vigorously attacked the half-gothic, half-pagan edifice which still imprisons the free flight of the spirit,—no one who has thrown among a public much addicted to routine and formalism, so many bold negations, so many religious and social views, novel and contrary to all existing ones,—yet no one who excites less of hostility and animadversion. There is generally so much calmness and impartiality in his attacks, so much conviction in his thoughts, so entire an absence of egotism, that we are compelled to listen to what, if uttered by any other man with anger or contempt, would excite a storm of opposition. There is never anger in the language of Mr. Carlyle; disdain he has, but without bitterness, and when it gleams across his pages, it speedily disappears under a smile of sorrow and of pity, the rainbow after a storm. He condemns, because there are things which neither heaven nor earth can justify; but his reader always feels that it is a painful duty he fulfils. When he says to a creed or to an institution, “you are rotten,—begone!” he has always some good word upon what it has achieved in the past, upon its utility, sometimes even upon its inutility. He never buries without an epitaph,—“*Valeat quantum valere potest.*” Take as an instance, above all, his ‘History of the French Revolution.’

We place in the second rank his tendencies toward the ideal,—that which we shall call, for want of a better word, his spiritualism. He is the most ardent and powerful combatant of our day in that re-action, which is slowly working against the strong materialism that for a century and a half has maintained a progressive usurpation, one while in the writings of Locke, Bolingbroke or Pope, at another in those of Smith and Bentham, and has tended, by the doctrines of self-interest and material well-being, to the enthronement of selfishness in men’s hearts. All the movement of industrial civilization, which has overflowed intellectual and moral civilization, has not deafened him. Amidst the noise of machinery, wheels and steam-engines, he has been able to distinguish the

stifled plaint of the prisoned spirit, the sigh of millions, in whose hearts the voice of God whispers at times, "*Be men!*" and the voice of society too often cries, "In the name of Production, be brutes!" and he is come, with a small number of chosen spirits, to be their interpreter. He declares that all the bustle of matter and of industry in movement does not weigh against the calm, gentle and divine whisper that speaks from the depths of a virtuous soul, even when found in the lowest grade of mere machine-tenders; that the producer, not the production, should form the chief object of social institutions; that the human soul, not the body, should be the starting-point of all our labours; since the body without the soul is but a carcase; whilst the soul, wherever it is found free and holy, is sure to mould for itself such a body as its wants and vocation require. In all his writings, in '*Sartor Resartus*,' in his '*Lectures*,' in his '*Essays*' especially, (some of which appear to us to be among the best of Mr. Carlyle's writings,) the standard of the ideal and divine is boldly unfurled. He seeks to abolish nothing, but he desires this truth to be acknowledged and proclaimed, that it is the invisible which governs the visible, the spiritual life which informs the exterior; he desires that the universe should appear, not as a vast workshop of material production (whether its tendency be to centre, as at the present day, in the hands of a few, or to spread, according to the utopian schemes of Owen or Fourier, among the whole community), but as a temple, in which man, sanctified by suffering and toil, studies the infinite in the finite, and walks on toward his object in faith and in hope, with eyes turned constantly toward heaven. Toward this heaven the thought of the writer soars continually with fervour, sometimes even with a kind of despair. It is a reflection of this heaven, the image of the sun in the dew-drop, which he seeks in terrestrial objects. He penetrates the symbol, to arrive at the idea: he seeks God through visible forms, the soul through the external manifestations of its activity. We feel that wherever he found the first suppressed, the second extinguished, nothing would be left for him but idolatry, falsehood, things to despise or to destroy. For him, as for all who have loved, suffered, and have not lost, in the selfish pursuit of material gratifications, the divine sense which makes

us men—it is a profound truth that “we live, we walk, and we are in God.” Hence his reverence for nature,—hence the universality of his sympathies, prompt to seize the poetical side in all things, —hence, above all, his notion of human life devoted to the pursuit of duty, and not to that of happiness,—“the worship of sorrow and renunciation,” such as he has given it in his chapter “The Everlasting Yea” of *Sartor Resartus*, and such as comes out in all his works. There are, no doubt, many who will term this a truism; there are others who will call it utopian. We would however remind the first that it is not enough to stammer out the sacred words “sacrifice and duty,” and to inscribe the name of God upon the porch of the temple, in order to render the worship real and fruitful: the theory of individual well-being rules incontestably at the present day, we will not say all our political *parties* (this it does more than enough of course), but all our social *doctrines*, and attaches us all unconsciously to materialism. We would likewise remind the second, that although we have pretended for the last fifty years to organize everything with a view to the interests, that is to say the happiness, of society, we yet see before us a society harassed by ills, by misery and complaints in eighteen-twentieths of its members. Is it then just to treat the contrary practice as utopian? In looking around us, we affirm that the spiritual view which Mr. Carlyle takes of human life is the only good, the only essentially religious one,—and one of extreme importance, here especially, where the very men who battle the most boldly for social progress are led away by degrees to neglect the development of what is highest, holiest and most imperishable in man, and to devote themselves to the pursuit of what they call the useful. There is nothing useful but the good, and that which it produces; it is a consequence to be foreseen, not a principle to be invoked. The theory which gives to life, as its basis, a *right* to well-being, which places the object of life in the search after happiness, can only lead vulgar minds to egoism, noble and powerful minds to deception, to doubt and to despair. It may indeed destroy a given evil, but can never establish the good; it may dissolve, but cannot reunite. Whatever names it assume, in whatever Utopia it may cradle itself, it will invariably terminate in organizing war,—

war between the governors and governed in politics, disguised under the name of a system of guarantees, of balance, or of parliamentary majorities,—war between individuals in economy under the name of free competition (*free* competition between those who have nothing and who work for their livelihood, and those who have much and seek a superfluity),—war, or moral anarchy, by effacing all social faith before the absolute independence of individual opinion. This is nearly the present state of things in the world,—a state from which we must at any cost escape. We must come to the conviction, in this as in all other cases, that there exist no rights but those which result from the fulfilment of duty; that our concernment here below is not to be happy, but to become better; that there is no other object in human life than to discover, by collective effort, and to execute, every one for himself, the law of God, without regarding individual results. Mr. Carlyle is an eloquent advocate of this doctrine, and it is this which creates his power: for there are, thank God, enow good instincts at the bottom of our hearts to make us render homage to the truth, although failing in its practice, when it finds among us a pure-minded and sincere interpreter.

We place in the third rank our author's cosmopolitan tendencies,—*humanitarian* we would say, if the word were in use; for cosmopolitism has at the present day come to indicate rather the indifference than the universality of sympathies. He well knows that there is a holy land, in which, under whatever latitude they may be born, men are brethren. He seeks among his equals in intelligence, not the Englishman, the Italian, the German, but *man*: he adores, not the god of one sect, of one period, or of one people, but God; and, as the reflex of God upon earth, the beautiful, the noble, the great, wherever he finds it: knowing well, that whencesoever it beams, it is, or will be, sooner or later for all. His points of view are always elevated; his horizon always extends beyond the limits of country; his criticism is never stamped with that spirit of nationalism (we will not say of nationality, a thing sacred with us all), which is only too much at work amongst us, and which retards the progress of our intellectual life by isolating it from the universal life,

derived from the millions of our brethren abroad. He has attached himself earnestly to the widest literature endued with this assimilating power, and has revealed it to us. His *Essays on Schiller, on Goethe, on Jean Paul, on Werner*, his excellent translations from the German, will remain a testimony of the naturalization which he has given to German literature amongst us; as the beautiful pages in his *Lectures on Dante*, and some of those which he has devoted to French writers, testify the universality of that tendency which we distinguish here as forming the third characteristic of his mind.

To descend to qualities purely literary, Mr. Carlyle is moreover a powerful artist. Since the appearance of his work on the French Revolution, no one can any longer dispute his claim to this title. The brilliant faculties which were revealed in flashes in his previous writings burst out in this work, and one must have a very limited view of the actual duties of the historian to be able to judge it coldly and to remark its defects. He carries his reader along, he fascinates him. Powerful in imagination, which is apt to discover the sympathetic side of things and to seize its salient point,—expressing himself in an original style, which, though it often appear whimsical, is yet the true expression of the man, and perfectly conveys his thought,—Mr. Carlyle rarely fails of his effect. Gifted with that objectivity, of which Goethe has in recent times given us the highest model, he so identifies himself with the things, events or men which he exhibits, that in his portraits and his descriptions he attains a rare lucidness of outline, force of colouring and graphic precision: they are not imitations, but reproductions. And yet he never loses, in the detail, the *characteristic*, the unity of the object, being, or idea which he wishes to exhibit. He works in the manner of a master, indicating by certain features, firm, deep and decisive, the general physiognomy of the object, concentrating the effort of his labour and the richness of his light upon the central point, or that which he deems such, and placing this so well in relief that we cannot forget it. *Humour*, or the faculty of setting off small things, after the manner of Jean Paul, abounds in his writings. Beside the principal idea, secondary ideas meet us at every step, often new and important in themselves, particles of gold scat-

tered upon the shore by the broad wave of the writer's thought. His epithets, although numerous, are seldom without force : they mark a progression in the development of the idea or the qualities of the object. His diction may have faults ; of these we shall not treat here, but we may remark that the charge of obscurity so commonly brought against all thinkers endowed with originality, is, generally speaking, only a declaration of incompetence to comprehend or to judge of their ideas. Moreover his style is, as we have said, the spontaneous expression of the genius of Mr. Carlyle, the aptest form to symbolize his thought, the body shaped by the soul. We would not that it were otherwise ; what we require in all things is, *man as he was meant to be*.

Thus frank, honest and powerful, "*ohne Hast, aber ohne Rast*," Mr. Carlyle pursues his career : may he long continue it, and reap the honours that he merits,—not for himself so much, as for the gratification of those who esteem him, of all those who would see the relation between intelligence and the public drawn more and more close ; and may he thus, in his pilgrimage here, attain the consciousness that the seed which he has scattered has not been given to the wind.

We have stated sufficiently at large what is absolutely good in the writer we have undertaken to estimate, that we might the more freely fulfil a second duty, that of declaring what appears to us to render this noble talent incomplete, and to vitiate his work by keeping it behind what the times require elsewhere, and will soon require here. It is a very important question (too important for the few pages we can here devote to it) that we must now glance at : upon it depends the question of the duty imposed at the present time on the whole world. It appears to us that Mr. Carlyle's tendency, hitherto appreciated from only one point of view,—tory, whig, or sectarian,—well deserves that we should seek to appreciate it from the point of view of the future, from which all the present transitional parties are excluded.

There is but one defect in Mr. Carlyle, in our opinion, but that one is vital : it influences all he does, it determines all his views ; for logic and system rule the intellect even when the latter pretends to rise the most against them. We refer to his view of the *collective* intelligence of our times.

. That which rules the period, which is now commencing, in all its manifestations,—that which makes every one in the present day complain, and seek good as well as bad remedies,—that which everywhere tends to substitute, in politics, democracy for governments founded upon privilege,—in social economy, association for unlimited competition,—in religion, the spirit of universal tradition for the solitary inspiration of the conscience,—is the work of an *idea*, which not only distances the object, but misplaces the starting-point of human activity; it is the collective thought seeking to supplant, as the point of view in the social organism, the individual thought; the spirit of humanity *visibly* surpassing (for it has been always silently and unperceived at work) the spirit of man. In the past, we studied one by one the small leaves of the calix, the petals of the corolla; at the present day our attention is turned to the full expansion of the flower. Two thousand years, from the earliest times of Greece down to the latest times of Pagan Rome, worked out Individuality under one of its phases; eighteen centuries have enlightened and developed it under the other. At the present day other horizons reveal themselves,—we leave the individual for the species. The instrument is organized; we seek for it a law of activity and an outward object. From the point of view of the individual we have gained the idea of right; we have worked out (were it only in thought) liberty and equality—the two great guarantees of all personality: we proceed further—we stammer out the word Duty, that is to say, something which can only be derived from the general law, *association*—that is to say, something which requires a common object, a common belief. The prolonged plaint of millions crushed beneath the wheels of competition has warned us that freedom of labour does not suffice to render industry what it ought to be, the source of material life to the state in all its members: the intellectual anarchy to which we are a prey, has shown us that liberty of conscience does not suffice to render religion the source of moral life to the state in all its members. We have begun to suspect, not only that there is upon the earth something greater, more holy, more divine than the individual,—collective Humanity,—an existence always living, learning, advancing toward God, of

which we are but the instruments,—but that it is alone from the summit of this collective idea, from the conception of the Universal Mind, “of which,” as Emerson says, “each individual man is one more incarnation,” that we can derive our function, the rule of our life, the ideal of our societies. We labour at this at the present day. It signifies little that our first essays are strange aberrations: it signifies little, that falling upon their weak side, the doctrines of St. Simon, of Owen, of Fourier and others, who have arisen or shall arise, may be condemned to ridicule. That which is important is the idea common to all these doctrines, and the breath of which has rendered them fruitful; it is the object which they all instinctively propose, the starting-point they take. Half a century ago, all the boldest and most innovating theories sought in the organization of societies guarantees for free individual action; society was fundamentally only the power of *all* directed to the support of the rights of *each*: at the present day, the most timid reformers start with a social principle to define the part of the individual,—with the admission of a law, to seek what may be its best interpreter and its best application. What, in the political world, are all these tendencies to centralization, to universal suffrage, to the annihilation of castes? Whence arise, in the religious world, all these discontents, all these reversions toward the past, all these aspirations toward a future, confused, uncertain, but wide, tolerant and reconciliatory of creeds at present opposed? Why is history, which in old times was satisfied with relating the deeds of princes or of ruling bodies of men, directed at the present day so much to the masses, and why does it feel the want of descending from the summits of society to its base? And what means that word Progress, which, understood in a thousand ways, is yet found on every lip, and becomes more from day to day the watchword of all labours? We thirst for unity: we seek it in a new and larger expression of the mutual responsibility of all men towards each other,—the indissoluble *copartnery* of all generations and all individuals in the human race. We begin to comprehend those beautiful words of St. Paul (Romans xii. 5), “We being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” We resolve the incertitude and caprices of indivi-

duals into a universality: we seek the intelligence and harmonizing of persons in the collective mass. Such is the tendency of the present times, and whosoever does not labour in accordance with it, necessarily remains behind.

Mr. Carlyle comprehends only the *individual*; the true sense of the unity of the human race escapes him. He sympathizes with all men, but it is with the life of each one, and not with their collective life. He readily looks at every man as the representative, the incarnation in a manner, of an idea: he does not believe in a "supreme idea," represented progressively by the development of mankind taken as a whole. He feels forcibly (rather indeed by the instinct of his heart, which revolts at actual evil, than by a clear conception of that which constitutes *life*) the want of a bond between the men who are around him: he does not feel sufficiently the existence of the bond between the generations past, present and future. The great religious thought, *the continued development of Humanity by a collective labour, according to an educational plan assigned by Providence*, fore-felt from age to age by a few rare intellects, and proclaimed in the last fifty years by the greatest European thinkers, finds but a feeble echo, or rather no echo at all, in his soul. Progressive from an impulse of feeling, he shrinks back from the idea as soon as he sees it stated explicitly and systematically; and such expressions as "the progress of the species" and "perfectibility" never drop from his pen unaccompanied by a taint of irony, which we confess is to us inexplicable. He seems to regard the human race rather as an aggregate of similar individuals, distinct powers in juxtaposition, than as an association of labourers, distributed in groups, and impelled on different paths toward one single object. Nation itself, country,—the second collective existence, less vast, but still for many centuries not less sacred than humanity,—vanishes, or is modified under his hand: it is no longer the sign of our portion of labour in the common work, the workshop in which God has placed the instruments of labour to fulfil the mission most within our reach; it is no longer the symbol of a thought, of a special vocation to be followed, indicated by the tradition of the race, by the affinity of tendencies, by the unity of language, by the character of localities; it is something reduced, as much as

possible, to the proportions of the *individual*. The nationality of Italy is the glory of having produced Dante and Christopher Columbus; the nationality of Germany that of having given birth to Luther, to Goethe and to others. The shadow thrown by these gigantic men appears to eclipse to his view every trace of the national thought of which these men were only the interpreters or prophets, and of the people, who alone are its depositary. All generalization is so repugnant to Mr. Carlyle, that he strikes at the root of the error as he deems it, by declaring that the history of the world is fundamentally nothing more than the biography of great men ('Lectures'). This is to plead, distinctly enough, the falseness of the idea which rules the movement of the times\*.

We protest, in the name of the democratic spirit of the age, against such ideas. History is not the biography of great men; the history of mankind is the history of the progressive religion of mankind, and of the translation by symbols, or external actions, of that religion. The great men of the earth are but the marking-stones on the road of humanity: they are the priests of its religion. What priest is equal in the balance to the whole religion of which he is a minister? There is yet something greater, more divinely mysterious, than all the great men,—and this is the earth which bears them, the human race which includes them, the thought of God which stirs within them, and which the whole human race collectively can alone accomplish. Disown not, then, the common mother for the sake of certain of her children, however privileged they may be; for at the same time that you disown her, you will lose the intellect of these rare men whom you admire. Genius is like the flower, which draws one half of its life from the moisture that circulates in the earth, and inhales the other half from the atmosphere. The inspiration of genius belongs one half to heaven, the other to the crowds of common mortals from whose life it springs. No one is

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\* This is the essence of Mr. Carlyle's ideas, as they appear to us to be deducible from the body of his views and opinions and the general spirit which breathes in his works. Of course we meet here and there with passages in opposition to this spirit, and in accordance with that of the age. It is impossible for a writer of Mr. Carlyle's stamp to avoid this; but we do not think we can be accused, if our remarks are read with attention, of unfaithfulness in the material point.

gifted with a right comprehension of it, without studying the medium in which it lives.

We cannot, however, here attempt to establish any positive ideas respecting the vocation of our epoch, or the doctrine of the collective progress which appears to us to characterize it: perhaps we may one day take an occasion to trace the history of this doctrine, which, treated as it still is with neglect, reckons nevertheless amongst its followers men who bore the names of Dante, of Bacon and of Leibnitz. We can at present only mark the existence of the contrary doctrine in the writings of Mr. Carlyle, and the consequences to which, in our opinion, it leads him.

It is evident that, of the two criteria of certainty, individual conscience and universal tradition, between which mankind has hitherto perpetually fluctuated, and the reconciliation of which appears to us to constitute the only means we possess of recognizing truth, Mr. Carlyle adopts one alone—the first. He rejects, or at least wholly neglects, the other. From this point, in his view, all follows in a natural connexion: individuality being everything, the doctrine of *unconsciousness* follows. The voice of God is heard in the intuition, in the instincts of the soul: to separate the individuality from every human external agency, and to offer it in native purity to the breath of inspiration from above,—this is to prepare a temple to God: God and the individual man—Mr. Carlyle sees no other object in the world. But how can the individual alone approach God, unless by transport, by enthusiasm, by the unpremeditated upward flight of the spirit, unshackled by method or calculation? Hence arises all Mr. Carlyle's antipathy to the labours of philosophy: they must appear to him like the efforts of a Titan with the strength of a pygmy. Of what avail are the poor analytical and experimental faculties of the individual intellect, in the solution of this immense and infinite problem? Hence, likewise, his bitter and often violent censure of all those who labour against the social state as it exists. Victory may indeed justify them, for victory is the intervention of God by his decree, from which there is no appeal: but where is the man who can pretend to fore-calculate, to determine this decree? What avails it to fill the echoes with complaint, like Philoctetes? What avails it to contend

convulsively in a powerless struggle? What is, *is*. All our endeavours will not alter it before the time decreed; that time God alone determines. What is to happen God will bring to pass, very probably by wholly different means from those which we, feeble and ephemeral creatures, may imagine. Point out the evil, calmly, wisely; then resign yourself, trust, and wait! There is a deep discouragement, a very despair, at the bottom of all that bold fervour of belief which characterizes many of Mr. Carlyle's pages. To us he seems to seek God rather as a refuge, than as the source of right and of power: from his lips, at times so daring, we seem to hear every instant the cry of the Breton mariner—"My God, protect me! my bark is so small and thy ocean so vast!"

Now all this is partly true, and nevertheless it is all partly false: true, inasmuch as it is the legitimate consequence from Mr. Carlyle's starting-point; false, in a higher and more comprehensive point of view. If we derive all our ideas of human affairs and labours from the notion of the individual, and see only in social life "the aggregate of all the individual men's lives"—in history only "the essence of innumerable biographies\*"—if we always place *man*, singly, isolated, in presence of the universe and of God, we shall have full reason to hold the language of Mr. Carlyle. If all philosophy be in fact, like that of the ancient schools, merely a simple physiological study of the individual,—an analysis, more or less complete, of his faculties,—of what use is it, but as a kind of intellectual gymnastics? If our powers be limited to such as each one of us may acquire by himself, between those moments of our earthly career which we call birth and death, they are indeed enough to attain the power of guessing and of expressing a small fragment of the truth: let him who can *realize* it here. But if we place ourselves in the point of view of the collective existence, Mankind, and regard social life as the continued development of an idea by the life of all its individuals,—if we regard history as the relation of this development in time and space through the works of individuals; if we believe in the *copartnery* and mutual responsibility of generations, never losing sight of the fact that the

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\* Essays—'Signs of the Times.'

life of the individual is his development, in a medium fashioned by the labours of all the individuals who have preceded him, and that the powers of the individual are *his* powers grafted upon those of all foregoing humanity,—all our ideas will change. Philosophy will appear to us as the science of the law of life, as “the soul” (Mr. Carlyle himself once uses this expression in contradiction to the general spirit of his works), “of which religion, worship is the body;” and the complaint of the intellect, so often looked upon as idle, from Byron down to George Sand, will be to us, what it is in truth, the registered, efficacious protest of the spirit, tormented by presentiments of the future, against a present corrupted and destroyed; and we shall feel that it is not only our right, but our duty, to incarnate our thought in action. For it matters little that *our* individual powers be of the smallest amount in relation to the object to be attained; it matters little that the result of *our* action be lost in a distance which is beyond our calculation: we know that the powers of millions of men, our brethren, will succeed to the work after us, in the same track,—we know that the object attained, be it when it may, will be the result of *all* our efforts combined.

The object—an object to be pursued collectively, an ideal to be realized as far as possible here below, by the association of all our faculties and all our powers—“*operatio humanæ universitatis*,” as Dante says in a work little known, or misunderstood, in which, five centuries ago, he laid down many of the principles upon which we are labouring at the present day—“*ad quam ipsa universitas hominum in tantâ multitudinem ordinatur, ad quam quidem operationem nec homo unus, nec domus una, nec vicinia, nec una civitas, nec regnum particulare, pertingere potest\**”—this alone gives value and method to the life and acts of the individual. Mr. Carlyle seems to us almost always to forget this. Being thus without a sound criterion whereby to estimate individual acts, he is compelled to value them rather by the power which has been expended upon them, by the energy and perseverance which they betray, than by the nature of the object toward which they are directed, and their relation to that object. Hence

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\* De Monarchiâ.

arises that kind of indifference which makes him, we will not say esteem, but love, equally men whose whole life has been spent in pursuing contrary objects,—Johnson and Cromwell, for example. Hence proceeds that spirit of fatalism (to call things by their right names) which remotely pervades his work on the French Revolution; which makes him sympathize so much with bold deeds, admire ability, under whatever form displayed, and so often hail, at the risk of becoming an advocate of despotism, might as the token of right. He desires undoubtedly *the good* everywhere and always; but he desires it, from whatever quarter it may come—from above or from below,—imposed by power, or proclaimed by the free and spontaneous impulse of the multitude; and he forgets that the *good* is above all a moral question; that there is no good apart from the consciousness of good; that it exists only where it is made, not obtained, by man: he forgets that we are not machines for production, from which as much work as possible is to be extracted, but free agents, called to stand or fall by our works. His theory of *unconsciousness*, the germ of which appears in the ‘Life of Schiller,’ and is clearly defined in his essay ‘Characteristics,’ although at first view it may indeed appear to acknowledge human spontaneity, yet does emphatically involve its oblivion, and sacrifices, in its application, the social object to an individual point of view.

Genius is not, generally speaking, unconscious of what it experiences or of what it is capable. It is not the suspended harp which sounds (as the statue of Memnon in the desert sounds in the sun) at the changing unforeseen breath of wind that sweeps across its strings: it is the conscious power of the soul of a man, rising from amidst his fellow-men, believing and calling himself a son of God, an apostle of eternal truth and beauty upon the earth, the privileged worshiper of an ideal as yet concealed from the majority: he is almost always sufficiently tormented by his contemporaries, to need a compensation—that of feeling his life in the generations to come. Cæsar, Christopher Columbus, were not unconscious: Dante, when, at the opening of the twenty-fifth chapter of the ‘Paradiso,’ he hurled at his enemies that sublime menace, which commentators without heart and without head have mistaken for a cry of supplication,—Kepler, when he wrote,

“My book will await its reader: has not God waited six thousand years before he created a man to contemplate his works?” \* — Shakspeare himself, when he wrote,

“ And nothing stands       \*       \*       \*       \*  
And yet, to times in hope, my verse shall stand † ”

—these men were not unconscious: but even had they been so, even were genius always unconscious, the question lies not there. It is not the consciousness of genius that is important to a man, but of that which he proposes to do: it is the consciousness of the object, and not that of the means, which we assert to be indispensable, whenever man has any great thing to accomplish. This consciousness pervaded all the great men who have embodied their thought,—the artists of the middle ages themselves, who have transferred to stone the aspiration of their souls towards heaven, and have bequeathed to us Christian cathedrals, without even gravings their names on a corner-stone. What then becomes of the anathema hurled by Mr. Carlyle at philosophy? What becomes of the sentence passed with so much bitterness against the restless complaints of contemporary writers? What is philosophy but the science of ends? And is that which he calls the disease of the times, at the bottom aught else than the consciousness of a new object, not yet attained? We know there are many men who pretend, without right and without reality, that they already possess a complete knowledge of the means. Is it this that he attacks? If so, let him attack the premature cry of triumph, the pride, not the plaint. This is but the sign of suffering, and a stimulus to research: it is doubly sacred.

Doubly sacred, we say,—and to murmur at the plaint is both unjust and vain; vain,—for whatever we may do, the words, “*the whole creation groaneth*,” of the apostle whom we love to quote will be verified the most forcibly in the choicest intellects, whenever an entire order of things and ideas shall be exhausted; whenever, in Mr. Carlyle’s phrase, there shall exist no longer any social faith:—unjust, for while on one side it attacks those who suffer the most, on the other

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\* *Harmonices Mundi: libri quinque.*

† *Sonnets, 60.* See also *Sonnets 17, 18, 55, 63, 81, etc.*

it would suppress that which is the symptom of the evil, and prevent attention being awakened to it. Suffer in silence, do you say? no, cry aloud upon the housetops, sound the tocsin, raise the alarm at all risks, for it is not alone your house that is on fire, but that of your neighbour, that of every one. Silence is frequently a duty, when suffering is only personal; it is an error and a fault, when the suffering is that of millions. Can we possibly imagine that this complaining, this expression of unrest and discontent which at the present day bursts out on every side, is only the effect of the personal illusions of a few egoistical writers? Do we imagine that there can be any pleasure in parading one's own real suffering before the public? It is more pleasant to cause smiles than tears in those around us. But there are times in which every oracle utters words of ill omen; the heavens are veiled, evil is everywhere: how should it not be in the heart of those, whose life vibrates most at the trembling of the universal life? What! after proving the evil every instant in our pages, after showing society advancing through moral anarchy and devoid of belief towards its dissolution, can we expect the features to remain calm? are we astonished if the voice trembles, if the soul shudders? Human thought is disquieted; it questions itself, listens to itself, studies itself: this is evidently not its normal state. Be it so; but what is to be done? must we abolish thought,—deny the intellect the right, the duty of studying itself, when it is sick? This is indeed the result of the essay on 'Characteristics,' one of Mr. Carlyle's most remarkable works. The first part is truly admirable: the evil is there perfectly charactered and the principal symptoms described; but the conclusion is most lame and impotent. It ends by suppressing (*how*, is not indicated) the disquietude, or what he terms the "self-sentience," the "self-survey," the consciousness. Would it not be better to endeavour to suppress the malady which produces it? There is a brilliant passage at the end of this same essay, which serves us as a conclusive reply:—

"Do we not already know that the name of the Infinite is Good, is God? Here on earth we are as soldiers, fighting in a foreign land, that understand not the plan of the campaign, and have no need to understand it, seeing well what is at our hand to be done. Let us do it like soldiers,

with submission, with courage, with a heroic joy. ‘Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.’ Behind us, behind each one of us, lie six thousand years of human effort, human conquest : before us is the boundless Time, with its as yet uncreated and unconquered continents and Eldorados, which we, even we, have to conquer, to create ; and from the bosom of Eternity shine for us celestial guiding-stars.”

We have selected this passage, because, approaching as it does near to the truth in the last lines, and contradicting them (in our opinion) in the first, it appears to us to include in essence all the certainties and uncertainties, the “everlasting Yea” and the “everlasting No” of Mr. Carlyle. GOD and DUTY—these are in fact the two sacred words which mankind has in all critical periods repeated, and which at the present day still contain the means of salvation. But we must know in what manner these words are understood.

We all seek God ; but where, how, with what aim ? This is the question. Seek him, Mr. Carlyle will say, in the starry firmament, on the wide ocean, in the calm and pure brow of a heroic man ; above all, in the words of genius and at the bottom of your heart, freed from all egoistic passions. God is everywhere : learn to find him. You are surrounded by his miracles : you swim in the Infinite : the Infinite is also within you. BELIEVE,—you will be better ; you will be what man should be. True indeed,—but how create belief ? This, again, is the question. In all periods of the history of mankind there have been inspired men who have appealed to every generous, great, divine emotion in the human heart, against material appetites and selfish instincts. These men have been listened to ; mankind has *believed* : it has, during several centuries, done great and good things in the name of its creeds. Then it has stopped, and ceased to produce. Why so ? Was the thing it had believed, false ? No, it was incomplete : like all human things, it was a fragment of absolute truth, combined with many truths relative to time and place, destined to disappear after having borne their fruit and when the human intelligence should be ripe for a higher initiation. When this period arrives, all isolated exhortation to faith is useless. What is preached may be eminently sage and moral ; it may have, here and there, the authority of an individual system of philosophy, but it will never compel belief. It may meet with a sterile theoretic approbation, but it will not command

the practice, it will not dictate the action, it will not gain that mastery over the *life* of men which can make it fruitful in all its manifestations. If the contrary were true, there is no religion that could not make the universe exist for ever in harmony, by the morality which is either developed or involved in it. But there are times in which all efforts are paralyzed by apathy, except we change (by the development of new relations between men, or by calling into action an element hitherto suppressed) the starting-point of social energy, and give a strong shake to the intellect, which has fallen asleep from want of nourishment.

We all seek God; but we know that here below we cannot attain unto him, nor comprehend him, nor contemplate him: the absorption into God of the Brahminical religions, of Plato and of some modern ascetics, is an illusion that cannot be realized: we are too far off. Our aim is to approach God: this we can do by our works alone. To incarnate, as far as possible, his Word; to translate, to realize his Thought, is our charge here below. It is not by contemplating his works that we can fulfil our mission upon earth; it is by devoting ourselves to the evolution of his work, without interruption, without end. The earth and man touch at all points on the infinite: this we know well, but is it enough to know this? have we not to march onwards, to advance into this infinite? But can the individual, finite creature of a day do this, if he relies only upon his own powers? It is precisely from having found themselves for an instant face to face with infinity, without calculating upon other faculties, upon other powers than their own, that some of the greatest intellects of the day have been led astray into scepticism or misanthropy. Not identifying themselves sufficiently with mankind, and startled at the disproportion between the object and the means, they have ended by viewing everywhere death and annihilation, and have no longer had courage for the conflict. The ideal has appeared to them like a tremendous irony.

In truth, human life regarded from a merely individual point of view is a melancholy thing. Glory, power, grandeur, all perish,—playthings of a day, broken at night. The mothers who loved us, whom we love, are snatched away; friendships die, and we survive them. The phantom of death watches

by the pillow of those dear to us : the liveliest and purest love would be a bitter irony, were it not a promise for the future ; and this promise itself is not felt strongly enough by us, such as we are at the present day. The intellectual adoration of truth, without hope of realization, is sterile ; there is a larger void in our souls, more room for the truth than we can fill during our short terrestrial existence. Break the bond of continuity between ourselves and the generations which have preceded and shall follow us upon the earth, and what is the devotion to ideas but a sublime folly ? Annihilate the connexion of all human lives, efface the infallibility which lies in the progression of collective mankind, and what becomes martyrdom but a suicide without an object ? Who would sacrifice—not his life, for that is little—but all the days of his life, his affections, the peace of those he loves, for country, for human liberty, for the evolution of a great moral thought, when a few years, perhaps a few days, will suffice to destroy it ? Sadness, exhaustless sadness, discordance between the will and the power, disenchantment, discouragement,—such constitute life, when looked at only from the individual point of view. A few rare intellects escape the common law and attain calmness ; but it is the calm of inaction, of contemplation ; and contemplation here on earth is the selfishness of genius.

We repeat, that Mr. Carlyle has instinctively all the presentiments of the period ; but not understanding, not admitting throughout, where he labours with the intellect rather than with the heart, the collective life, it is absolutely impossible for him to find the means of realization. A perpetual antagonism prevails throughout all that he does ; his instincts drive him to action, his theory to contemplation. Faith and discouragement alternate in his works, as they must in his soul. He weaves and unweaves his web, like Penelope : he preaches by turns life and nothingness : he destroys the powers of his readers, by continually carrying them from heaven to hell, from hell to heaven. Ardent, and almost menacing, upon the ground of idea, he becomes timid and sceptical as soon as he is engaged on that of its application. We may agree with him with respect to the aim—we cannot respecting the means ; he rejects them all, but he proposes no

others. He desires progress, but dislikes progressives: he foresees, he announces as inevitable, great changes or revolutions in the religious, social, political order; but it is on condition that the revolutionists take no part in them: he has written many admirable pages on Knox and Cromwell; but the chances are that he would have written as admirably, although less truly, against them, had he lived at the commencement of their struggles. Give him the past—give him a power, an idea, something which has triumphed and borne its fruits—so that, placed thus at a distance, he can examine and comprehend it under all its points of view, calmly, at his ease, without fear of being troubled by it, or drawn into the sphere of its action—and he will see in it all that there is to see, more than others are able to see. Bring the object near to him, and as with Dante's souls in the 'Inferno,' his vision, his faculty of penetration is clouded. If his judgement respecting the French revolution be in our opinion very incomplete, the reason is that the event is still continued, and that it appears to him living and disturbing. The past has everything to expect from him—the present, nothing—not even common justice. Have patience, he says, to those who complain; all will come to pass, but not in your way: God will provide the means. By whom then will God provide means upon earth unless by us? are we not his agents here below? Our destinies are within us: to understand them, we need intellect—to accomplish them, power. And why does he assign us the first, without the second? Wherefore does he speak to us at times, in such beautiful passages, of hope and faith, of the divine principle that is within us, of the duty which calls us to act, and the next instant smile with pity upon all that we attempt,—and point to us the night, the vast night of extinction, swallowing up all our efforts?

There is, in our opinion, something very incomplete, very narrow, in this kind of contempt which Mr. Carlyle exhibits, whenever he meets in his path with anything that men have agreed to call political reform. The forms of government appear to him almost without meaning: such objects as the extension of suffrage, the guarantee of any kind of political right, are evidently in his eyes pitiful things, materialism more or less disguised. What he requires is, that men should

grow better, that the number of just men should increase: one wise man more in the world would be to him a fact of more importance than ten political revolutions. It would be so to us also, were we able to create him, as Wagner does his Homunculus by blowing on the furnaces,—if the changes in the political order of things did not precisely constitute those very manifestations which appear to us indispensable to the life of the just and wise man. When a creed is the professed object, we must not capriciously destroy the instruments which may enable us fully to attain it.

We know well enough, that there are too many men who lose the remembrance of God in the symbol, who do not go beyond questions of form, contract a love for them, and end in a kind of liberalism for liberalism's sake. We do not need to enter our protest against this caprice, if the reader has paid attention to what we have already said. In our view the real problem, which rules all political agitation, is one of education. We believe in the progressive moral amelioration of man as the sole important object of all labour, as the sole strict duty which ought to direct us: the rest is only means. But where the liberty of means does not exist, is not its attainment the first thing needful? Take an enslaved country,—Italy for example,—there we find no education, no press, no public meetings; but censors, who, after having mutilated a literary journal for years, seeing that it still survives, suppress it altogether\*;—archbishops, who preach against all kinds of popular instruction, and declare the establishment of infant-schools to be immoral†;—princes, who stamp all the books belonging to their subjects‡. What can be done to ameliorate in such a country the moral and intellectual condition of the people? Take a country of serfs,—Poland or Russia for example,—how can we set about the attempt to annihilate the really existing distinction? Could the education of these nations be commenced otherwise than by a revolution? Take a man, for instance, who labours hard from fourteen to sixteen hours a day to obtain the bare necessities of existence; he

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\* The 'Subalpino,' the 'Letture Popolari,' in Piedmont; the 'Antologia' at Florence, etc.

† The Archbishop of Turin, Franzoni, in a pastoral letter.

‡ The Duke of Modena.

eats his bacon and potatoes (when indeed he can get them) in a place which might rather be called a den than a house; and then, worn out, lies down and sleeps: he is brutalized in a moral and physical point of view; he has not ideas, but propensities,—not belief, but instinct; he does not read,—he cannot read; he has not within his reach the least means of self-enlightenment, and his contact with the upper class is only the relation of a servant to a master, of a machine to the director of the machine. Of what use are books to such a being? How can you come at him, how kindle the divine spark which is torpid in his soul, how give the notion of life, of sacred life, to him, who knows it only by the material labour that crushes him, and by the wages that abase him? Alas! this man's name is Million; he is met with on every side; he constitutes nearly three-fourths of the population of Europe. How will you give him more time and more energy to develop his faculties, except by lessening the number of his hours of labour, and increasing his profits? How can you render his contact with the enlightened classes serviceable to him, except by altering the nature of his relations toward them? How, above all, will you raise this fallen soul, except by saying to him,—by telling him in *acts*, not reasonings which he does not understand,—“Thou too art man: the breath of God is in thee: thou art here below to develop thy being under all its aspects; thy body is a temple; thy immortal soul is the priest, which ought to sacrifice there for all”? And what is this act, this token destined to raise him in his own eyes, to show to him that he has a mission upon earth, to give him the consciousness of his duties and his rights, except his initiation into citizenship, the suffrage? What is meant by “re-organizing labour,” but bringing back the dignity of labour? What is a new form, but the *case* of a new idea? We perhaps have had a glimpse of the ideal in all its purity,—we feel ourselves capable of soaring into the invisible regions of the spirit. But are we, on this account, to isolate ourselves from the movement which is going on among our brethren beneath us? Must we hear ourselves addressed thus, “You profane the sanctity of the idea,” because the men into whom we seek to instil it are flesh and blood, and we are obliged to speak to their senses?

Condemn all action, then ; for action is only a form given to thought,—its application, practice. “The end of man is an *action*, and not a *thought*.” Mr. Carlyle himself repeats this in his ‘Sartor Resartus’ (book 2. ch. vi.), and yet the spirit which pervades his works seems to us too often of a nature to make his readers forget it.

It has been asked\*, what is at the present day the duty of which we have spoken so much ? A complete reply would require a volume, but we can point it out in a few words. Duty consists of that which the life of the individual represents in all possible acts, for the love of God and of man, *all* that he believes to be the truth, absolute or relative. Duty is progressive, as the evolution of the truth ; it is modified and enlarges with ages ; it changes its manifestations according to the requirement of times and circumstances. There are times in which we must be able to die like Socrates ; there are others, in which we must be able to struggle like Washington : one period claims the pen of the sage, another requires the sword of the hero. But ever, and everywhere, its source is God and his law,—its object, Humanity,—its guarantee, the mutual responsibility of men,—its measure, the intellect of the individual and the demands of the period,—its limit, power. Study the universal tradition of humanity, with all the faculties, with all the disinterestedness, with all the comprehensiveness of which God has made you capable ; where you find the general permanent voice of humanity agreeing with the voice of your conscience, be sure that you hold in your grasp something of absolute truth—gained, and for ever yours. Study also with interest, attention and comprehensiveness, the tradition of your epoch and of your nation,—the idea, the want, which ferments within them : where you find that your conscience sympathizes with the general aspiration, you are sure of possessing the relative truth. Your life must embody both these truths, must represent and communicate them, according to your intelligence and your means ; you must be not only MAN, but a man of your age ; you must act as well as speak ; you must be able to die without being compelled to acknowledge, “I have known such a fraction

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\* Mr. Horne, in his Preface to Gregory VII.

“ of the truth, I could have done such a thing for its triumph, “ and I have not done it.” Such is, in our opinion, duty, in its most general expression. As to its special application to our times, we have said enough on this point in the commencement of the part of our article which establishes our difference from the views of Mr. Carlyle, to render its deduction easy. The question at the present day is a perfecting the principle of association, a change of the medium in which mankind moves: duty therefore lies in a *collective* labour,—every one to measure his powers, and to see what part of this labour falls to him. The greater the intellect and influence a man enjoys, the greater his responsibility; but assuredly contemplation cannot satisfy duty in any degree.

Mr. Carlyle’s expression of duty is naturally different. Thinking only of individuality, calculating only the powers of the individual, he would rather restrict than enlarge its sphere. The rule which he adopts is that laid down by Goethe,—“ Do the duty which lies nearest thee.” And this rule is good, inasfar as it is, like all other moral rules, susceptible of a wide interpretation,—bad, so far as, taken literally, and falling into the hands of men whose tendencies to self-sacrifice are feeble, it may lead to the revival of selfishness, and cause that which at bottom should only be regarded as the wages of duty to be mistaken for duty itself. It is well known what use Goethe, the high-priest of the doctrine, made of this maxim, shrouding himself in what he called ‘ Art ’; and amidst a world in misery, putting away the question of Religion and politics,—“ a troubled element for Art,” though a vital one for *man*,—and giving himself up to the contemplation of forms and the adoration of self. There are at the present day but too many who imagine they have perfectly done their duty, because they are kind toward their friends, affectionate in their families, inoffensive toward the rest of the world. The maxim of Goethe and of Mr. Carlyle will always suit and serve such men, by transforming into duties the individual, domestic or other affections,—in other words, the consolations of life. Mr. Carlyle probably does not carry out his maxim in practice; but his principle leads to this result, and cannot theoretically have any other. “ Here on earth we are as soldiers,” he says:—true, but “ we

“understand nothing, nor do we require to understand any-thing, of the plan of the campaign.” What law, what sure object can we then have for action, excepting those to which our individual instincts lead us? Religion is the first of our wants, he will go on to say: but whilst to us religion is a belief and a worship in common, an ideal, the realization of which mankind collectively must seek,—a heaven, the visible symbol of which the earth must be rendered by our efforts,—to him it is only a simple relation of the individual to God. It ought therefore, according to our view, to preside over the development of collective life; according to his view, its only office is to pacify the troubled soul.

Does it at least lead to this conclusion? Is he (we speak of the writer, of whom alone we have a right to speak) calm? No, he is not: in this continual alternation between aspirations as of a Titan and powers necessarily very limited, between the feeling of life and that of nothingness, his powers are paralyzed as well as those of his readers. At times there escape from his lips accents of distress, which, whatever he may do, he cannot remove from the minds of those who listen to him with attention and sympathy. What else is that incessant and discouraged yearning after rest, which, although he has formally renounced the happiness of life, pervades all his works,—‘Sartor Resartus’ especially,—and which so constantly calls to our minds the expression of Arnaud to Nieolle,—“N’avons-nous pas toute l’éternité pour nous reposer?”—“Let me rest here, for I am way-weary, and life-weary; I will rest here, were it but to die; to die or to live is alike to me, alike insignificant . . . . Here, then, as I lay in that CENTRE OF INDIFFERENCE . . . . the heavy dreams rolled gradually away\*.” Alas! no, poor Teufelsdröck! there is no repose here on earth. It matters little if the limbs be bruised, the faculties exhausted. Life is a conflict and a march: the “heavy dreams” will return; we are still too low; the air is still too heavy around us for them to “roll away.” Strength consists in advancing in the midst and in spite of them,—not in causing them to vanish. They will vanish higher, when, after mounting a step upon the

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\* Sartor Resartus, Book ii. ch. 9.

ladder, life shall expand in a purer medium: the flower, too, springs and unfolds in the earth, to expand only in another element, in the air and sun of God. Meanwhile suffer and act; suffer for thyself, act for thy brethren, and with them. Speak not ill of science, of philosophy, of the spirit of inquiry; these are the implements which God has given us for our labour,—good or bad, according as they are employed for good or for evil. Tell us no longer that “life itself is a disease,—knowledge, the symptom of derangement;” talk no more of a “first state of freedom and paradisiacal unconsciousness\*.” There is more *Byronism* in these few words than in the whole of Byron. Freedom and paradise are not behind, but before us. Not life itself, but the deviation from life, is disease; life is sacred; life is our aspiration toward the ideal,—our affections, engagements, which will one day be fulfilled, our virtues, advanced toward greater. It is blasphemy to pronounce a word of disrespect against it.

The evil at the present day is, not that men assign too much value to life, but the reverse. Life has fallen in estimation, because, as at all periods of crisis and disorganization, the chain is broken which in all forms of belief attaches it through humanity to heaven. It has fallen, because the consciousness of mutual human responsibility, which alone constitutes its dignity and strength, being lost together with the community of belief, its sphere of activity has become restricted, and it has been compelled to fall back upon material interests, little objects, minor passions. It has fallen, because it has been too much individualized; and the remedy lies in re-attaching life to heaven,—in raising it again, in restoring to it the consciousness of its power and sanctity. The means consist in tempering the individual life in the common elements, in the universal life; they consist in restoring to the individual that which we have from the outset called the feeling of *the collective*, in pointing out to him his place in the tradition of the species, in bringing him into communion, by love and by works, with all his fellow-men. By isolating ourselves, we have begun to feel ourselves feeble and little; we have begun to despise our efforts and those of our brethren toward the

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\* Essays—‘Characteristics.’

attainment of the ideal; and we have in despair set ourselves to repeat and comment upon the "*Carpe diem*" of the heathen poet: we must make ourselves great and strong again by association: we must not dishonour life, but make it holy. By persisting to search out the secret, the law of individuality in the individuality itself, man ends only in egoism, if he is evil-minded—in scepticism, in fatalism, or in contemplation, if he is virtuous. Mr. Carlyle, whatever he may himself think, fluctuates between these last three tendencies.

The function which Mr. Carlyle at present fulfils in England appears to us therefore important, but incomplete. Its level is perhaps not high enough for the demands of the age; nevertheless it is noble, and nearer to the object which we have pointed out than that perhaps of any other living writer. All that he combats is indeed really false, and has never been combated more energetically: that which he teaches is not always true. His longings belong to the future—the temper and habits of his intelligence attach him to the past. Our sympathies may claim the one half of the man,—the other half escapes us. All that we regard as important, he considers so also; all that we foresee, he foresees likewise. We only differ respecting the road to follow, the means to be adopted: we serve the same God, we separate only in the worship. Whilst we dive into the midst of present things, in order to draw inspiration from them, while we mingle with men in order to draw strength from them, he retires to a distance and contemplates. We appeal perhaps more than he to tradition; he appeals more than we to individual conscience. We perhaps run the risk of sacrificing something of the purity of the *idea*, in the pursuit of the means; he runs the risk, without intending it, of deserting his brother-labourers.

Nevertheless, let each follow his own path. There will always be a field for the fraternity of noble spirits, even if they differ in their notion of the present life. Their outward manifestations may vary, but only like the radiations of light upon the earth. The ray assumes different colours, according to the different media through which it passes, according to the surface of the objects upon which it falls; but wherever it falls, it warms and vivifies more or less visibly, and all the beams proceed from the same source. Like

the sun, the fountain of terrestrial light, there is a common element in heaven for all human spirits which possess strong, firm and disinterested convictions. In this sanctuary Mr. Carlyle will assuredly meet, in a spirit of esteem and sympathy, all the chosen spirits that adore God and truth, who have learned to suffer without cursing, and to sacrifice themselves without despair.

We can but briefly refer to Mr. Carlyle's last work, recently published, entitled 'Past and Present.' We have read it with attention, and with a desire to find cause to alter our opinions. We however find nothing to retract: on the contrary the present work appears to us to confirm those opinions. 'Past and Present' is a work of power, and will do incalculable good. No one will close its pages without having felt awakened in him thoughts and feelings which would perhaps have still slept long in his heart: yet should the reader desire to open it again, with a view to study how he may realize these sentiments and thoughts in the world, he will often, in the midst of eloquent pages, of fruitful truths expressed with an astonishing energy, meet with disappointment. 'Past and Present' is, in our opinion, remarkable rather for the tendencies and aptitudes which it presents than for the paths which it points out. It is a step *toward* the future, not a step *in* the future. Will Mr. Carlyle take this step? We know not, but we have everything to hope for.

## ARTICLE VIII.

1. *Die Serbische Revolution.* Von LEOPOLD RANKE. Hamburg, 1829.
2. *La Turquie d'Europe.* Par AMI BOUÉ. Paris, 4 vols. 8vo : 1840.
3. *Treaties and Hatti-Sheriffs relating to Servia, presented to the House of Commons by the Queen's command, May 1843.* London.
4. *Hansard's Debates in the House of Lords, 5th May and 28th July 1843. Debate in the House of Commons 15th August, 1843.*
5. *Servia, the Circassia of the West.* By DAVID URQUHART, Esq. London, 1843.
6. *The Portfolio, Nos. 1 and 2, August 1st and September 1st, 1843.* London.

THE interest which the principality of Servia\* has of late excited in Western Europe is far from being unmerited. With the simplicity of ancient manners, her inhabitants appear to have inherited a spirit of patriotism, belonging rather to classical than to modern ages. Without an ally, unsustained even by the slightest hope of foreign assistance, they have not shrunk from drawing down upon themselves the indignation of a power, to whose pretensions, however extravagant, the cabinets of Europe are accustomed to submit in silence. By the honest assertion and steadfast maintenance of their rights, they have hitherto baffled all the stratagems of their adversary. The Poles and Circassians had taught the world that the arms of Russia are not entirely exempt from the most humiliating reverses ; the Serbians have shown by an equally valuable example, that her claims to be invincible in diplomacy rest on no better foundation.

So few sources of information respecting Servia are generally accessible, and the interests involved in the question of her independence from foreign interference are so complicated and momentous, that we shall offer no apology for presenting our readers with a succinct account of her present position

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\* The name of *Servia* is a western corruption : it is disliked by the Serbians (or as they call themselves the Sirbs) on account of its analogy to the Latin *servus*.





Chancer



## CHAUCER'S PARDONER.

CHAUCER, the critics tell us, possessed a genius eminently dramatic, and a matchless talent for story-telling, but frequently allowed his mediæval love of moralizing to defeat, for the moment, his narrative powers, and now and then grossly violated dramatic propriety, whether carelessly or from the exigencies of satire. As instances of the first of these sins are usually cited the self-satisfied speech of Nature in *The Doctor's Tale*, and the long soliloquizing excursus on free will and predestination in the *Troilus*. The most flagrant offense under the second head is commonly supposed to be the harangue of the Pardoner.

In *The Doctor's Tale*, Nature is produced in person, exhibiting her artistic masterpiece Virginia, and boasting of her in a showmanlike address to the public. The device may be granted absurd, and it certainly interferes with the flow of the narrative. But there is a further consideration, the character of the doctor. The doctor is a very formal person, from whom a degree of prosiness is to be expected. It was Chaucer's artistic duty, in the *Canterbury Tales*, — as it has clearly been his purpose, — not only to select stories appropriate to the several pilgrims, but to make the method of delivery correspond to the character of the teller. The offending passage in the *Troilus* must be justified, if at all, on other grounds. A long soliloquy on the foreknowledge of God, absolute necessity, necessity conditional, and free will is not quite what one expects from a Trojan prince whose love is going to the Grecian camp. But though a great anachronism, and though rather unskillfully brought in, the soliloquy is by no means an impertinence. The idea of fate is subtly insistent throughout the poem, — it is perhaps even the key to *Cressida's* character; and surely, at this

juncture, if ever, *Troilus* may have his thoughts about the mysterious inevitableness that is governing his life.

These and other considerations make it worth while to look with some scrutiny at what passes for Chaucer's great sin against dramatic propriety, the confessions of the Pardoner.

The Pardoner, it is said, exposes himself with unnaturally frank cynicism. He might properly indulge in a sly sneer at the pretenses of his vocation; but to proclaim that his relics are a sham; to declare that his

"intent is only for to win,

And nothing for correction of sin,"

and that when once the penitents' money is in his pouch he does not care if their "souls go a-blackberrying" after death; to avow in a coolly casual way that he is himself "a full vicious man," — all this is dramatically impossible. But this is not all: after the tale is finished, the Pardoner, according to the usual view, is so foolish as to try his impostures on the very audience which he has just enlightened as to his own vices and the tricks of his trade.

An attempt is sometimes made to account for these absurdities by a reference to the *Roman de la Rose*. The character of the Pardoner is in part a reproduction of the *False-Semblant* of that poem, and *False-Semblant*, as an allegorical personage, is not bound by dramatic law. It is a convention of satire, illustrated in a drastic way by Garnet's speech in *Oldham*, to make an odious character describe himself unsparingly, — a trick absurd in itself, but no more absurd than such conventions as the long "aside" in the drama. This defense, or explanation, has always been felt to be unsatisfactory. Chaucer is not a reformer. He is not even, if rightly taken, a satirist. His aim is not to reconstruct the Church or to ameliorate hu-

manity, but to depict certain characters, and to let them tell stories. He has no right to resort to conventions which, permissible to one who depicts a character *ad hoc*, are unjustifiable in one who depicts a character for its own sake. It is an equally weak defense to allege that the Pardoner is drunk. One draught of ale, however "moist and corny," would never fuddle so seasoned a drinker. Besides, he manifests none of the signs of intoxication. Unless, then, it can be shown that the character of the Pardoner is consistent with itself and with nature, the poet has blundered; and the gravity of his blunder is increased by the excellence of the Pardoner's Tale, perhaps the best short narrative poem in the language. In general, Chaucer shows exquisite delicacy in fitting the various Canterbury tales to the characters of the tellers. In the present case, we have a beautiful story, wonderfully told, put into the mouth of a vulgar, prating rascal, not only destitute of moral and intellectual dignity, but so lacking in common sense that he cannot hold his tongue about his own impostures. Yet the prologue, the tale, and the epilogue all show Chaucer at the height of his powers. It is possible that an explanation of the problem may be found by considering all the available evidence as to the Pardoner's character. It may appear from such an examination that his character is consistent throughout, and of a kind to make the apparent impropriety of the introductory confession in conformity to nature.

In the first place, then, we may be sure that the Pardoner is a thorough-paced scoundrel. His bulls of popes and cardinals may be genuine, — it would in any case not do for him to confess to the felony of forging the pope's seal, — but his relics are counterfeit, and he has no illusions about the holiness of his mission. He preaches for money, and has no concern for the reformation of morals or for genuineness of repentance on the

part of those who offer to his relics and receive his absolution. He is skillful at his business: it has brought him in a hundred marks (almost seven hundred pounds in our values) a year since he first took it up. Like all clever impostors, he is proud of his dexterity. Under ordinary circumstances, prudence would constrain him to suppress the exhibition of this pride; but the circumstances are not ordinary. He is not on his rounds. The pilgrims are a company associated by chance, and likely never to assemble again after their return supper at Harry Bailly's. If they repeat his words, it will not much matter. He cannot labor in his vocation while he is with them, and none of them are likely to cross his path in the future. They are not of the kind among whom he is used to ply his arts. His best field is the country village. To be sure, the parson and the ploughman are from the country; but the character of the parson makes the parish which he administers a forbidden region to such loose fish as the Pardoner. One of the ordinary restraints on freedom of self-revelation, then, is wanting: he need fear no disagreeable consequences.

Further, the unsoundness of the Pardoner's morals is known to the company before he begins his cynical confessions. He may pose as a holy man when he is swindling the peasantry of some remote hamlet; but hypocritical airs and graces would be absurdly futile among his present companions. That there has been no attempt at such posturing is made clear enough by the host, the gentles, and the Pardoner himself. The host calls on the Pardoner for a merry tale; the Pardoner assents with an alacrity which warrants vehement suspicion, and the gentles protest that they want no ribaldry, and insist on something elevated and instructive. This is significant enough of the impression the Pardoner has made on his traveling companions. The Pardoner easily adapts himself to

the temper of his audience. It is his business to know moral tales. He has his sermons by heart, and most of these, as a matter of course, contain an *exemplum*, an anecdote which can be "improved" to the edification of a churchful of laymen. But before beginning he feels the need of refreshment.

" ' I graunte ywis,' quod he, ' but I moot thynke  
Upon som honest thyng whil that I drynke.' "

Not that he has "to think awhile before he can recollect some decent thing," as has been suggested. He is honestly thirsty, and glad of an excuse to quench his thirst, no doubt; but, being a man of ability and eloquence, he must have plenty of "honest things" at his tongue's end.

Perhaps we have now facts enough to explain the self-revelation of the Pardoner's prologue. He knows what his fellow-travelers think of him; he has just consented to tell an over-facetious story; he is now about to preach a highly edifying sermon. There is no opportunity to pull wool over the eyes of his hearers, even if there were any motive for it. Sure that they will perceive the enormous discrepancy between his character and his teaching, the Pardoner is impatient of occupying the position of a futile hypocrite. He is too clever a knave to wish others to take him for a fool. Hence these cynical confessions at the outset, the dramatic purpose of which is now clear. The Pardoner is, in effect, saying to the pilgrims: "I am about to tell you a moral tale. I am going to preach you one of my sermons. You will find the sentiments of this sermon unexceptionable. Do not think, however, that I expect you to believe me in earnest. You know what kind of fellow I am, and this is my trade."

With these feelings, then, the Pardoner begins his tale or sermon. Knowing it by heart, as he tells us himself, and being accustomed to preach with great unction, he is soon rapt into the

same mood of conventional earnestness that he has found so effective in the pulpit. By the time he arrives at the ejaculations on the wickedness of sin and the horrors of homicide, gluttony, lechery, and gambling, which (though marked "auctor" by the officious stupidity of some scribe) form the "application" of the whole discourse, he is at a white heat of zeal. Forgetful of his surroundings, he does not stop with the "application," but goes on to the exhortation with which he regularly concludes his harangues:—

" Now, good men, God foryeve yow your trespass,

And ware yow fro the sinne of avarice!  
Myn holy pardoun may yow alle warice,  
So that ye offre nobles or sterlinges,  
Or elles silver broches, spones, ringes.  
Boweth your heed under this holy bulle!  
Cometh up, ye wyves, offreth of your wolles!  
Your name I entre heer in my rolle anon,  
Into the blisse of heven shul ye gon;  
I yow assoile, by myn heigh power,  
Yow that wol offre, as clene and eek as cleer  
As ye were born.— And lo, sirs, thus I  
preche;

And Jesu Crist, that is our soules leche,  
So graunte yow his pardoun to receyve,  
For that is best, I wol yow nat deceyve!"

The last four lines of this passage are particularly significant. The Pardoner's invitation to come up and offer to the relics and receive absolution is glaringly out of place in a speech to his fellow-travelers, to whom he has already made full confession of the emptiness of his pretensions. "Come up, ye wives, and offer of your wool!" has no appropriateness when addressed to the pilgrims. Perceiving the absurdity, the speaker pulls himself up with the explanatory "This is the kind of sermon I am in the habit of delivering." ("And lo, sirs, thus I preche.")

So far, all is plain sailing. We might suppose the preacher carried away by professional enthusiasm, and forgetting just where he ought to have stopped. We might suppose, on the other hand, that he wished to give his hearers a

complete specimen of his discourses, final invitation and all. But what shall we think of his next words? —

“ And lo, sirs, thus I preche ;  
And Jesu Crist, that is our soules leche,  
So graunte yow his pardoun to receyve,  
For that is best, I wol yow nat deceyve ! ”

It may be that these words, apparently so out of consonance with anything we have yet heard from the Pardoner, furnish the key to his character. May we not believe that the beautiful and impressive story that he has just told — a story that no one can read without emotion — has moved even him, though he has told it a thousand times before in the way of his profession? The unusual circumstances under which he has preached his sermon may have assisted in producing this effect. For once, perhaps, the hideous incongruity between his preaching and the profligate invitation to come up and be pardoned through the efficacy of his trumpery relics has appeared to him. Possibly we may venture to think that the Pardoner, moved by his own tale, went on mechanically to this professional invitation, perceived its absurd inopportuneness with a start, and thus had its hypocritical villainy suddenly projected in his own mind against the beauty and impressiveness of his tale. This would still further increase his emotion, which, after an explanatory “ And lo, sirs, thus I preche,” finds vent in an ejaculation profoundly affecting in its reminiscence of the Pardoner's better nature, which he had himself thought dead long ago. “ My pardon,” he says, “ is of no account, as you know. God grant that you receive Christ's pardon, which is better than mine. I will not deceive you, though deceit is my business.”

Of course this better mood can last but a moment. There is no question of repentance or reformation, for the Pardoner is a lost soul. The reaction comes instantly, and is to the extreme of reckless jesting. Aware that the pilgrims

know him thoroughly by this time, for he has even taken pains to reveal himself, he nevertheless impudently urges them to kiss the relics and make offering and receive pardon. The invitation has sometimes been taken as given in dead earnest ; but this is inconceivable. It would imply superhuman folly on the speaker's part to try to deceive the pilgrims when he has just warned them against his own deceit. Besides, we have evidence that the Pardoner hurries into this strain of reckless jocularly to escape from the serious mood that has surprised him.

“ But, sirs, o word forgot I in my tale,”

are the words with which he begins the closing passage, and these very words indicate his confusion. For he has not forgotten his relics. On the contrary, he has just been talking about them, and praising their efficacy. The whole passage is jocose. At the end, he turns to the host, and pointedly suggests that *he* begin, as being the most sinful of the company. This remark alone would suffice to indicate how little serious purpose there is in the proposition of the Pardoner. The host is the last person to yield to seductive suggestions of this sort in any case, and it would be idle to expect him to do so after the full revelation of himself that the Pardoner has made.

The host, who of course has no knowledge of the conflict of feelings through which the Pardoner is passing, naturally replies in a strain of coarse raillery. Under ordinary circumstances, the effect of this jesting on the Pardoner would be to evoke a still more scurrilous response. He must often have bandied words in all good nature with persons of the host's freedom of speech, and there is no reason to suppose that he is constitutionally thin-skinned. Under ordinary circumstances, too, so fluent a man as the Pardoner, if he got angry, would have plenty of words in which to

vent his wrath. On the present occasion rage makes him dumb.

"This Pardoner answered not a word:  
So wroth he was no word he wolde seye."

The inference seems to be plain. The contest of feelings in the Pardoner's mind, the momentary return to sincerity, which must have been accompanied by profound emotion, the revulsion of feeling indicated by his jesting proposition to his fellow-travelers, are too much for his equanimity. When the host replies with a scurrile jest, he is simply too angry to speak. That this is the correct interpretation of the course of events is further substantiated by the surprise which the host feels at this, to him, inexplicable anger on the part of the Pardoner. He has not noticed the Pardoner's moment of emotion; he has, therefore, supposed the jesting to be of the ordinary sort, and he feels injured that his reply is taken in ill part.

"Now," quod our host, "I wol no lenger playe  
With thee, ne with no other angry man."

The knight makes up the quarrel, which of course neither party wishes to prolong, and the company rides on as before.

If these considerations are sound, we have in Chaucer's treatment of the Pardoner no violation of dramatic propriety, but, on the contrary, the subtlest piece of character delineation the poet has ever attempted. The Pardoner is an able and eloquent man, a friar, very likely, who had entered his order with the best purposes, or, at any rate, with no bad aims, and with possibilities of good in him, and had grown corrupt with its corrup-

tion. His debasement seems to be utter, for one must not forget the picture in the general prologue. Nothing but a ribald story appears possible from him. But, by showing us the man in a moment of moral convulsion, Chaucer has invested him with a sort of dignity which justifies the poet in putting into his mouth one of the most beautiful as well as one of the best told tales in the whole collection.

If the considerations referred to be not sound, there is no explaining away the difficulties: the cynical prologue remains a monstrous absurdity; the error in tact involved in giving a despicable fellow a magnificent tale to tell seems ultimate; the earnest remark of the Pardoner that Christ's pardon is better than his is a piece of impertinence; the Pardoner's anger at the host's jesting is improbable; the dumbness of his wrath is out of character; and the surprise of the host at his losing his temper is nugatory. The interpretation suggested seems not only to be in harmony with all the phenomena, but even to explain some phenomena otherwise inexplicable except as blunders. That a fortuitous collection of blunders should combine to make up a subtle piece of character delineation is not impossible, perhaps, but is hardly what one would expect. Is it not reasonable, then, to accept an interpretation of the prologue and the tale which brings them into harmony with what we know of Chaucer's exquisite delicacy of portraiture, and wonderful power of dramatically adapting his stories to their tellers, particularly as the Pardoner's Tale must have been written when all his powers were at their height?

*George Lyman Kittredge.*

## SOME NEW LIGHT ON NAPOLEON.

THE personality of Napoleon still overshadows Europe. We see plainly enough now that he was not the champion of the principles liberated by the French Revolution. If the course of democracy, of representative government, had been regular in France, there would have been no Consulate and Empire. The system which Napoleon erected was a personal system through which his Titanic egotism might operate. That he swept away many old abuses, that he decreed reforms which had a constitutional, or even a democratic tendency, was because he thought thereby to make his autocracy more sure. Sentiment in politics never governed him; nay, he never acknowledged any principle save self-interest. Of this he made no secret.

As early as 1797, in speaking of France to Melzi at Milan, he said scornfully, "A republic of thirty million souls, with our customs, our vices, — how is it possible? That is a chimera with which the French are infatuated, but which will pass, like so many others. They need glory and the gratification of vanity; but liberty, — they know not what it means." Three years later, shortly after he became First Consul, he frankly told the Council of State, "My policy is to govern men according as the greatest number wish. . . . By turning Catholic I put an end to the war in the Vendée, by turning Mussulman I established myself in Egypt, by turning Ultramontane I won over the priests in Italy. If I were to govern a Jewish population, I would reestablish the Temple of Solomon. So, too, I shall talk liberty in the free part of San Domingo; I shall confirm slavery in the Ile de France, and even in the slave part of San Domingo, — reserving to myself the right to soften and limit slavery wher-

ever I maintain it, to reestablish order and to uphold discipline wherever I maintain liberty. That, I think, is the way to recognize the sovereignty of the people."

Self-interest being thus bluntly proclaimed the guiding motive of Napoleon's career, it is idle to search his acts for proofs of philanthropic or reforming intentions. What amelioration France and Europe enjoyed through his agency was incidental, and not due to any recognition on his part of abstract rights or duties. He adopted such methods as, he believed, would conduce to the realization of his dream of world-empire; that they pleased or aggravated the peoples of Europe was wholly immaterial to him. His dictatorship was a great interruption in the process of democratization, an interruption so stupendous that democracy has not yet recovered from it. Therefore the personality of Napoleon exceeds in significance that of any other modern ruler, perhaps of all other rulers except Cæsar; and though he has been dead threescore and twelve years, the world still catches up every detail, no matter how trivial, which may throw further light on his character. For from his egotism, from what, in current scientific dialect, would be called his psychology, sprang those purposes, desires, whims, which became embodied in a new system of government and in a new combination of kingdoms.

There has recently appeared in Paris the first volume of a series of memoirs<sup>1</sup> which promise to be among the most valuable ever published concerning the Napoleonic period. Readers familiar with Taine's mosaic portrait of Napoleon will remember that he quotes often from the

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires du Chancelier Pasquier*. Première partie: Révolution, Consulat, Empire. Tome I., 1789-1810. Paris: Plon. 1893.

# The Bibliographical Society

## NEWS SHEET, No. 3.

No. 3.

APRIL, 1894.

### Notices.

Notice is hereby given that in accordance with a resolution passed by the Council on March 19th, the Roll of the Society will be declared closed on May 21st, and thereafter candidates will be elected only to fill vacancies.

The Council will meet on *Monday, April 16th*, and again on *May 21st*, for the election of Members, and the Secretaries will be glad to receive the names of candidates and to give information as to the objects of the Society, up to Saturday, May 19th.

The Council desires that it should be understood that, in carrying out the policy sanctioned by the General Meeting in January, it is not influenced by any desire to make the Society a close corporation in the interest of existing members, but that this step is being taken in order that, with a definite income and a definite number of helpers, the Society may proceed with the work it has undertaken, with the knowledge of how much it is possible to do in each year.

By the same resolution by which of closure is fixed at May 21st, the has reserved to itself the right to each year, irrespective of the number of members on the Roll, not more than a certain number of candidates, who are ready to help the Society at once by their work, or who have rendered distinguished services to bibliography.

The APRIL MEETING will be held at 20, Hanover Square, on *Monday, the 16th*, at 8 p.m., when Mr. S. J. ALDRICH will read a Paper on "The Augsburg Printer of the Fifteenth Century."

The MAY MEETING will be held on *Monday, the 21st*, when Mr. E. ALMA read a Paper on "The Bibliography of Basilike."

Mr. REDGRAVE's monograph on Ratdolt and his work at Venice, is now ready for delivery during the current year. Members who have not yet paid their subscription for 1894, are reminded that, according to Rule 8 of the Society's constitution, a copy cannot be sent to them while in arrear.

## March Meeting.

On Monday, March 19th, Mr. H. S. ASHBEE  
in the Chair, a Paper was read by Mr.  
H. B. WHEATLEY, on  
"THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CHAUCER."

The need of a guide to the scattered publications on Chaucer and his works has long been felt, but it is only recently that it has become possible to marshal facts, many of which have been gathered together by the diligence of Chaucer students during the last few years. The author is indebted to Professor Skeat for the full list of Chaucer manuscripts, and for other information embodied in the great edition of Chaucer's Works, now in course of publication. The proposed bibliography takes in more than is usually understood as appertaining to such work. Thus it will include a list of the various extant manuscripts. However much difference of opinion there may be respecting the advisability of registering manuscripts in a General Bibliography, it must be allowed that in Chaucer's case no bibliography could be complete which omitted them. Foreign editions, translations, criticisms, etc., are included, for it is submitted that nothing written on English authors, whether in English or in a foreign language, or whether published abroad or at home, should be rejected from English bibliographies.

Supposititious works should be registered. It is not enough, when a work has been proved not to be by an author, to exclude it. It must be "nailed to the counter," so that inquirers may have certain information respecting the causes of rejection, and so be saved the trouble of going over the ground again. The heading of Lost Poems will be

useful in drawing attention to what should be sought for. Many books which we know to have once existed have been lost and it is by no means hopeless to expect that in the future some of them may be found.

The list of headings under which the Bibliography is arranged, stands as follows:

1. Collected Works (beginning with Pynson's edition of the Canterbury Tales and some other poems in 1526, and William Thynne's edition of the Works, 1532, down to Skeat's edition of 1894.
2. Canterbury Tales (59 MSS., and printed editions from Caxton 1478(?) and 1484(?) to the present day).
3. Romaunt of the Rose.
4. Troilus and Cressida.
5. Minor Poems (MSS., Texts and separate editions).
6. Prose Works (Astrolabe and Translation of Boethius).
7. Modernizations.
8. Tales from Chaucer.
9. Translations.
10. Imitations.
11. Supposititious Works.
12. Biographies (Life Records).
13. Chauceriana ("Originals and Analogues," "Essays on Chaucer," published by the Chaucer Society, etc.)
14. Lost Poems.

It was pointed out that during less than fifty years, Caxton, Pynson and Wynkyn de Worde printed five folio editions of the Canterbury Tales, besides prints of some of the minor poems. Then in the seventy years between 1532 and 1602, seven editions of the collected works were published. In conclusion the author alluded to the brilliant list of men who had devoted their talents to

the editing of Chaucer's Works, a list which included the names of Caxton, Thynne, Speght, Tyrwhitt, Bradshaw, Furnivall, Morris, Hales and Skeat.

In the discussion which followed, Dr. FURNIVALL, who was present as a visitor, urged strongly that notices of MSS. were an essential part in all literary bibliographies, and proceeded to rouse the meeting to enthusiasm by an onslaught on the indifference to their National literature which had caused Englishmen to be so slow over the work necessary to place it in its proper light. The discussion was continued by Mr. CHRISTIE, and Mr. WHEATLEY briefly replied.

At the close of this discussion, a short Paper was read by Mr. HUTH, on

"SOME SUPPLEMENTARY SUGGESTIONS  
TO MR. WHEATLEY'S PAPER (of December,  
1892) ON AN ENGLISH BIBLIOGRAPHY."

Mr. HUTH began by remarking that the only thing which stood in the way of the immediate commencement of a bibliography of English Literature, was that no two persons were agreed on what plan it should be drawn up. He reviewed briefly the objections to a chronological catalogue, passing over a subject-division as wholly impracticable. A catalogue under authors' names with chronological and subject indexes, and an appendix of bibliographical lists would satisfy every requirement. The catalogue should include all books printed in England in whatever language, all books by Englishmen printed abroad in whatever language, all books by foreign authors in reply to British works, and all books printed in America up to the declaration of independence.

Mr. HUTH then expressed doubts as to the helpfulness of a multiplicity of types, and even of dividing lines, as aids to reproducing

the differences between titlepages of different editions; colophons and imprints should be given in italics in each entry, not referred to by numbers. Collation by sheets of binding, is far more important than collation of pagination, both for modern books and old ones. Titles should be copied in full. Photographic facsimiles should be added in the case of works of great rarity.

After the main alphabetical catalogue authors' names should follow a reindex of books printed before 1640, arranged chronologically, of books printed at special presses, arranged under the names of the printers of early books, with the books printed, of books containing (a) engravings, wood-cuts, of books wholly engraved: Pine's "Horace" and many song-books, all books in peculiar types, of books on vellum (b) on special paper, of printed books, of books printed from manuscripts, of lost books, of unique books, of books containing music, of book maps, of books with trade catalogues, of books containing colour printing, and of books with illustrations coloured by

The first step towards all this work would be to appoint an editor for each letter of the alphabet, and to supply him with a list of authors who may begin by cutting up and down all printed catalogues. These should then be apportioned among our members for correction, a work that many of our members might join in. Supposing it never got any further, this work would be valuable, and would always be a foundation for subsequent work. When we go further, we need not trouble ourselves with the cost of printing. If the bibliography should cost £6,000 or £10,000 to print, if it well might, we shall find that, if it is printed, it will be printed.

A discussion followed, and on the motion of Mr. WELCH a resolution was passed

viting the Council to do everything in its power to forward the scheme.

At the subsequent meeting of the Council the President, the Treasurer, the two Secretaries, and Mr. WHEATLEY were nominated as a sub-committee, to consider in what way a beginning might be made.

Members who are willing to help in the matter are invited to communicate with the Assistant Secretary.

### Notes and News.

At the last Meeting of the Council the following candidates were elected Members of the Society:—The Right Honble. Lord Windsor, Messrs. Walter Behrens, Ernest Clarke, G. K. Fortescue, R. E. Graves, Horace Hart, J. B. Hodge, S. P. Jackson, C. P. Johnson, Marshall C. Leferts, C. G. Luzac, J. T. Naake, C. Sayle. The number of members on the roll of the Society is now 213.

The following bibliographical works have been recently published in France:—"Catalogue des incunables de la bibliothèque publique de Besançon," par Auguste Castan, pp. xix, 817; "Bibliographie raisonnée et analytique des ouvrages relatifs à Jeanne d'Arc," par Pierre Lanery d'Arc, Paris, lib. Techener, 4to; a 4th edition of the "Bibliographie des ouvrages relatifs à l'amour," par le C. D'I\*, Paris, lib. Ch. Gilliot, 8vo; a supplement to M. Henri Cordier's "Bibliotheca Sinica" (Paris, E. Leroux), and the second volumes of MM. F. de Mély and Ed. Bishop's "Bibliographie générale des inventaires imprimés" (E. Leroux, 8vo), and of M. D'Eylac's "La Bibliophilie en 1893" (Paris, lib. A. Rouquette, 8vo). Correspondents have not yet come forward to send notes as to bibliographical works printed in other countries.

In England, the long-promised final volume of the set of "Books about Books" has at last appeared under the title of "Bookbindings: An Essay in the History of Gold-tooled Bindings," by Herbert P. Horne, one of our recently elected members. To the first number of Mr. Kegan Paul's new quarterly

"Bibliographica," Mr. W. Y. Fletcher contributes an article on a unique binding from the library of Grolier. Mr. Robert Proctor writes on the "Accipies" Woodcut (a curious cut of a teacher and his pupils, varieties of which were used as educational books by several fifteenth century printers in Germany), and Mr. Pollard on the Books of Hours of Geoffroy Tory. Another of our members, Mr. Laurence Housman, has specially designed the initial letters and tail-pieces which contribute greatly to the beauty of the magazine. Other articles are written by Mr. Elton, Mr. Andrew Lang, M. Octave Uzanne, Miss Prideaux and Mr. Gordon Duff.

In Paris, as well as in London, some good books have changed hands lately. In the former city, a very special copy of Octave Uzanne's "Son Altesse la Femme" sold for the equivalent of £100. It contained a number of original drawings, as well as unique states of many of the engravings. "La Française du Siècle," with thirty water-colours added sold for exactly 4s. 2d. more than "La Femme." Both these books, with others of less importance came from the library of the author. In London, the Towney dispersion occupied Sothebys for ten days the last being devoted entirely to a collection of books on sports and pastimes. It is many years since such an extensive assortment of books of this kind was offered for sale at one time. Thirteen beautiful water-colour drawings by Absolon, for the engravings to illustrate Major's 1844 edition of the "Angler" brought £150, and Thiers's "Académie de l'Espèce," large and thick folio full of curious plates, 1628 £14 15s. Alken's "National Sports," 1821, sold for £33, a very high price, accounted for by the fact that it was in the original old red morocco. The total amount realized at this sale was £966 16s. (March 8th.) All Mr. Towney's books, of whatever kind, sold well—against the general rule, however, for collectors like to buy casually and as though by accident. There is no room for judgment when a bookseller's stock is cleared out against time. First Folio, 1623, brought £169, but the title and Ben Jonson's verses were wanting. Hoare's "Wiltshire," on large paper, 8 vols. (1810-52), £81, let so far as price was concerned, a large number of scarce and valuable Topographical works. There were also a few Missals, one an illuminated fifteenth century MS. on vellum, £80; also Verard's primer of 1503, £73. The highest amount realized for one book appeared to be £410 for an illuminated French MS. (early fifteenth century) of the Romance of Lancelot du Lac.—(J. H. S.)





4.

Cooper



ART. VII.—*Poetical Works of William Couper.* Edited by ROBERT BELL. 3 Vols., 1854. [*Annotated Edition of the English Poets*, by ROBERT BELL, Author of the “History of Russia,” “Lives of the English Poets,” &c. v. d.]

It is a favourite saying in the present day, that “the tendencies of the age are essentially prosaic.” The precise meaning which these words are intended to convey may not be very clearly understood by the majority of those who utter them; but they seem to embody a general idea of the unpoetical character of the times. There is a confused notion in men’s minds, that the Practical and the Ideal not only cannot associate, but cannot co-exist one with the other—that the voice of Fact must bellow down the voice of Fiction—that the clangings of our iron must drown the harpings of our bards—that because we can travel on a straight road, at the rate of forty miles an hour, the excursions of the imagination and the wanderings of Fancy must be disregarded for evermore—that the generation which has tunnelled Box-hill can never care to climb Parnassus.

All this is in effect so often repeated, in one form or another, that its truth has been taken for granted by multitudes of men who echo and re-echo the cry; and still we are told that the age is unpoetical, and that the present generation is a generation of worshippers at the great shrine of Matter-of-Fact. But what, after all, is the meaning of the cry? Does it mean, that given up as we are to materialities—laying down iron roads by hundreds of miles; spanning immense rivers with arches of stone; flashing messages along electric wires with the speed of the lightning; covering the seas with magic fire-ships; multiplying by the same mysterious agency textile fabrics not wrought by hands, of a beauty and a splendour such as Solomon in all his glory never dreamt of—the intelligence and the inventiveness of the age expend themselves upon projects of utilitarianism, and intent upon the palpable realities before us, we have neither eyes to “glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,” nor wings to bear us up in illimitable space; that whilst we are coining one metal into another, the brain-coinage of that great ideal currency, which is more enduring than iron and stone, must necessarily be suspended? Does it mean that the aliment of poetry is vanishing from off the face of the earth—that external and internal beauty, are both ceasing to be—that inanimate nature is more formal and the human mind more prosaic; that the seasons do not alternate, nor men’s hearts pulse as they were wont; that mechanism has usurped the world, and gross

selfishness the people ;—in a word, that the sources of imaginative inspiration are utterly dried up ?

Or is it meant, that although the few may *write* poetry, the many will not *read* it ; that our minds, harnessed, as it were, in a go-cart of one utilitarian pursuit or another, have no sympathy with anything of which the answer to the *cui bono* does not lie upon the surface ; that we have by one consent adopted the Benthamite doctrine that Poetry has no greater claims than Push-pin upon mankind, and in this “ money-making age,” arrived generally at a conclusion that it “ does not pay.” Is it meant that we have too much to do with the literature of fact—that what with our Blue Books and Statistics, our Mark-Lane Expresses, our Railway, our Mining, and our Building Journals, our Associations for the advancement of Science, our Sanitary Commissions, and our endless official reports on every conceivable subject, we have no time to read anything that is not designed primarily to teach us to make money or to take care of ourselves ? Is it meant that all iron has so eaten its way upon earth, that the sublimest and the sweetest hymnings of the bard cannot rouse in the breasts of the many one sympathetic emotion ?

In whichever direction the interpretation of the popular aphorism is to be found, we pronounce it without a misgiving, to be a rank and offensive fallacy. The smoke of a steam-vessel may sometimes obscure the sun from the loiterers upon deck ; but all the steam in the world, or the material tendencies of which it is the representative, could as readily put out the sun as they could put out poetry. As long as there is sunshine ; as long as there are moon and stars ; sky and cloud ; green fields and sweet flowers ; the changing ocean, and the human heart which contains the likeness of them all, the few will sing and the many will listen. To us, indeed, this would seem to be a truism scarcely worth uttering, if it had not been in effect so often contradicted. We are utterly at a loss for a reason why it should be otherwise. There is room enough in the world both for Poetry and Steam. A man is not less likely to be endowed with “ the vision and the faculty divine,” or less likely to admire its manifestations in others, because his father goes up to London every day, with a “ season ticket” in his pocket, from the fair hills of Surrey or the green woods of Berkshire, instead of travelling in the Brixton or Clapham omnibus along the old high road ; or because he himself can rush from the smoke and din of the metropolis in a few hours,—

“ To see the children sporting on the shore,  
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore ;”

to bury himself deep in a mighty wood, or to ascend the rugged mountain side until he steep himself in the clouds. If there be anything in poetical education, anything in the effect of external influences upon the poetical temperament, surely the agency which brings a man most readily within their reach—within the reach of all the beauties and benignities of Nature—is to be regarded as one of the best aids to the development of the Divine faculty, and in no sense an obstruction to it. It is not one, indeed, of the least benefits which Steam has conferred upon the age, that it brings the country—sea and shore, hill and valley, wood and plain, the yellow corn-fields, the winding river, the mossy turf, the fragrant wild-flowers, the song of the lark, the tinkling of the sheep-bell—within the reach of the anxious town; almost as it were, to the very doors of dwellers in the heart of our cities.\* Let those who talk about our iron roads marring the beauty of the country, because here and there may be seen an unsightly embankment, consider that there are thousands and thousands amongst us, who but for these iron roads, would never see the country at all. The Rail is, indeed, the great *open-sesame* of Nature. It is the key that unlocks her choicest treasures to the over-worked clerk and the toil-worn mechanic, and brings all sweet sounds and pleasant sights and fragrant scents within the reach of men who else would know of nothing that is not foul, unsightly, and obnoxious. What is this but to say that the Rail is a great teacher, educating both head and heart, preparing the few to utter, and the many to appreciate the utterances of Poetry.

All this may be conceded; and yet it may still, perhaps, be alleged that the age is essentially a prosaic one. An increasing addiction, it may be said, to the study of the exact sciences is as much an effect as a cause of all those great material improvements which are the growth and the characteristic of the civilisation of the nineteenth century. And it is assumed that Science and Poetry are the antagonists, not the help-meets and handmaids of each other. But most true is it of our civilisation, that—

“ Science and Poetry and Thought  
Are its lamps—They make the lot  
Of the dwellers in a cot  
So serene they curse it not.”

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\* Coleridge said, apologetically,

“ I was reared

In the great city . . . .

And saw nought lovely, but the sky and stars.”

Contrast this with Wordsworth's well-known lines,

“ The tall cliff

Was my delight, the sounding cataract

Haunted me like a passion,” &c. &c.

They do not enter the cottage, or the mansion, to jostle and to wrestle with, but to aid, encourage, and to support each other. They may rarely find expression through the same oracular mouth-piece. But their influences upon the generation at large are conjoint and co-extensive.\* The well-known, often quoted Baconian passage, setting forth that the same age which is fertile in men of action, as warriors and statesmen, is fertile also in men of thought, as poets and philosophers, might have both a more general and a more particular application. The age which produces giants of one kind produces giants of another. The same influences which operating upon one order of intelligence generate great mechanics, operating upon another will generate great poets. As with the body of an individual man, so with the body of men in the concrete, there is a sympathy between its different parts. Those salutary influences which strengthen one organ seldom fail to strengthen another. At all events, nothing can be more preposterous than to affirm that because one part thrives another must languish. The healthiness of the age manifests itself in the general development of intellectual power of all kinds. We see it alike—

“In the steam-ship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind ;”

the progress of the nineteenth century is, in a word, *catholic*.

But after all, the best reply to the vulgar assertion, that the tendencies of the age are essentially prosaic, is to be found in the simple material fact of the large amount of poetry that is written, and the large amount that is read. It is true that much poetry, or much that presumes to call itself poetry, is written, but never read. The volumes of poetry which issue from the press, never to be read, but by friends and critics,—and by them sparingly—are past counting. Of this phenomenon there are two noticeable things to be said. Firstly, that very much of this unread poetry would once have been largely read. Unread poetry is not always unreadable poetry. Many a poet, doomed in this nineteenth century to taste all the bitterness of neglect, would at the close of the eighteenth have made for himself a great reputation. There have been worse versifiers included in editions of standard British poets than those, which week after week are now dismissed by our periodical critics in a few faint sentences of feeble praise. And, secondly, that poetry must, to a considerable number of people, be its own exceeding great reward, or so much would not be written for the mere pleasure of writing it. Every allowance being made for the deluding ope-

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\* It may be remarked, too, that men of science were never more poetical, nor poets more scientific, than at the present time.

rations of hope—for all the excesses of a sanguine temperament—still the fact is mainly to be accounted for by a reference to the truth, that

“There is a pleasure in poetic pains,  
Which none but poets know.”—

And if this pleasure be widely experienced, as by its results we know it to be, at the present time, the age can not be an unpoetical one. It matters not, in this view of the case, whether the poetry be good or bad. We speak here of those poetical yearnings which may find sufficient or insufficient utterance. Whatever may be their audible expression, whether in immortal music or wretched stutterings, there is a feeling of poetry at the source of it. The existence of the poetical temperament is indicated even by the profitless effort—the impotent desire. It is something even to aspire to be a poet.

It will, perhaps, be said, that if poetry, which would once have found many readers, now finds few or none, the age is, therefore, an unpoetical one. And so it would be, if, whilst rejecting this once tolerated mediocrity, we had nothing better to fall back upon. But the generation which can boast of Wordsworth and Shelley—Byron and Crabbe—Campbell and Rogers—Keats and Tennyson,—as its cotemporaries, has no need to betake itself to such mediocrity as was erst represented by Pomfret and Yalden. Has Mr. Tennyson, the most poetical of poets, any reason to complain of a paucity of readers? Has Elizabeth Barrett sung to a people who will not hear?

And, in the meanwhile, how fares it with our older bards? Are those who have sung worthily to a past generation forgotten or neglected by the present? There is no more cogent argument to be adduced, in denial of the assumption that the tendencies of the age are essentially prosaic, than the fact that there are, at the present time, *three* different editions of the standard British poets in course of serial publication. Would there be this ample supply if there were no adequate demand? Would Mr. Bell, Mr. Gilfillan, and Mr. Wilmot waste their fine minds in the strenuous idleness of editing generation after generation of English poets, only to supply lining for our trunks? Would Mr. Parker, or Mr. Routledge, or any other publisher, sink his capital in an unfathomable well of hopeless speculation? Would Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Murray fritter away their learning and their enterprise upon new editions of “Lives of the Poets,” and other kindred works, if we had ceased to delight in poetry? Would minor publishers be, as they are, continually on the alert to pounce, hawk-like, on expired copyrights of popular poets, if the tendencies of the age were essentially prosaic?

As we write, a prospectus is placed before us, announcing a forthcoming serial issue of Byron's poems, in penny numbers, under the auspices of some lawful pirate, who knows that the speculation will be a profitable one. Already have some of the earlier poems of Southey, Scott, and others, become common property—common property, which, in a prosaic age, no one would have thought worthy of the paper and print expended on its appropriation. Of the quantity of poetry that is *printed* in the present day, no doubt can be entertained. It may, therefore, without any violence, be assumed that much is *read*.

Indeed, if there were no other evidence of the tastes and feelings of the present generation than that afforded by the edition of the English Poets, for which we are now continually indebted to the talents and energies of Mr. Robert Bell, and Mr. J. W. Parker, we should be abundantly satisfied with the demonstration. The "Annotated Edition of the English Poets" promises to be the best ever presented to the public. The name, however, suggests to us *in limine*, what appears to us to be a defect in the design of the work. We have been used, when there was less need than now of the more comprehensive designation, to read of editions of the "*British* Poets." We gather from the different title now adopted, that it is the intention of Mr. Bell to exclude from his edition the whole of our *Scottish* poetry. It is not merely as North British Reviewers that we protest against this exclusiveness. In the advertisements to the edition, it is expressly stated, that "it will include the works of several poets entirely omitted from previous collections, especially those stores of lyrical and ballad poetry in which our literature is richer than that of any other country, and which, independently of their poetical claims, are peculiarly interesting as illustrations of historical events and national customs." Is the collection of these stories to stop short at the border? Is all the Ballad minstrelsy, the growth of those tracts of country which lie to the north of the Tweed, to be ignored in a great national collection like this? Is a work which must necessarily contain the writings of so many minor minstrels to give no sign of the existence of Robert Burns?

We shall hardly be suspected of any national partiality, in claiming for our principal northern bards due recognition, in a work which we believe will take its place not only in our own but in our children's and children's children's libraries, on both sides of the Border. "In the exercise of a strict principle of selection," say the projectors of the Annotated Edition, "this edition will be rendered *intrinsically* more valuable than any of its predecessors." It is only, indeed, upon the basis of the intrinsic excellence of the collection, that such a work as this can build

up its claims to an extensive and a lasting popularity. The editor of such a work must by no means be diverted from the duty of gathering together poetry of the highest order,—

“ All such as manly and great souls produce,  
Worthy to live, and of eternal use ;”

in search of what is merely curious and interesting from the extrinsic stamp of antiquarianism that is upon it. We should entertain no apprehension of such an editor as Mr. Bell falling into an error of this kind, even if he had not pledged himself to regard the intrinsic excellence of the poetry itself before every other consideration. That, in particular cases, there must always be some variance in the public taste is certain. It would be impossible for any editor, in a selection of poetical works to fill a hundred or more volumes, not to offend some prejudices and disappoint some predilections. There is a story told by Mr. Charles Butler to the effect that a party of gentlemen having agreed to write down the names of, we believe, the six most interesting books they had ever read, one name only appeared in every list. The book thus honoured was *Gil Blas*. There would not be this variance of opinion with regard to the intrinsic excellence of any number of British poets ; but it would be curious to see the lists which would be given in by a dozen intelligent men well-read in English literature, if they were invited to name the poets who, in their estimation, ought to be selected to fill a hundred volumes like those which are now before us. In respect, indeed, of this matter of selection, Mr. Bell must prepare himself to be charged with some errors both of commission and of omission. But we have little fear that starting, as he does, with the design of regarding intrinsic poetical excellence above all other considerations, he will go far wrong in respect of the general result.

“ The edition now proposed,” says Mr. Bell, “ will be distinguished from all preceding editions in many important respects.” When Cowper first examined Johnson’s edition he wrote to Mr. Unwin, saying, “ A few things I have met with, which if they had been burned the moment they were written, it would have been better for the author, and at least as well for his readers. There is not much of this, but a little is too much. I think it a pity the editor admitted any. The English muse would have lost no credit by the omission of such trash. Some of them appear to me to have a very disputable right to a place among the classics, and I am quite at a loss when I see them in such company to conjecture what is Dr. Johnson’s idea or definition of classical merit. But if he inserts the poems of

some who can hardly be said to deserve such an honour, the purchaser will comfort himself with the hope that he will exclude none that do." The hope, however, was disappointed. The selection was the work of the booksellers, not of the editor,—and the former estimated the merits of a poet according to the existing amount of demand for his works. The great rival edition of the last century, known as "Bell's British Poets," was only so far better than Johnson's that it commenced at an earlier date, and included the works of Chaucer, Spencer, and Donne.\*

Speaking of these two editions of the British Poets as of the only ones whose completeness renders them worthy of notice, Southey says, in his *Life of Cowper*, "I know not whether Johnson's edition was more accurate" (than Bell's, of whom Mr. Croker had said that the "inaccuracy of the press was very conspicuous,") "but this I know, that unless the press be carefully compared with the last edition of a book that has passed under the author's own eye, every new edition will introduce new corruptions into the text, and of the very worst kind, by the careless substitution of words, which, without making nonsense of the passage, alter its meaning or destroy its beauty." Of the truth of this there is no doubt. The probable evil of which Southey here speaks is a real one. The projectors of the edition now before us rightly observe, that "the necessity for a revised and carefully annotated edition of the English poets may be found in the fact that no such publication exists. The only collections we possess consist of naked and frequently imperfect texts, put forth without sufficient literary supervision." That an edition of the English poets, distinguished at the same time by a judicious selection of authors, a careful revision of the text, and in-

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\* "England, I believe," says Southey, in his '*Life of Cowper*,' "is the only country in which any general collection of its poets has been attempted. The first was brought forward by a noted bookseller, named John Bell. . . . He, in the year 1777, announced an edition of the poets of Great Britain, complete from Chaucer to Churchill. The more respectable of the London booksellers, regarding this as an invasion of what they called their literary property, (as by the custom of the trade it was considered to be,) resolved upon publishing a rival edition, which should have the advantage of an ostensible and competent editor, of a more correct text, and of including several authors, whose works being still copyright by law, could not be printed unless with the consent of those publishers in whom that right was vested. Dr. Johnson, as holding deservedly the highest rank among his contemporaries, was the person whom they selected to undertake this task, and to write the lives of the poets. And they also, like Bell, proposed to commence with Chaucer, and to include all the English poets down to their own time. The selection, however, was made, not by the editor, but by the booksellers; and they were directed in it by no other criterion than that of public opinion, as evinced in the demand for certain books. The poet whose works were not called for was dead to them. Departing, therefore, on that consideration, from their first intention, instead of commencing their collection with Chaucer they began with Cowley."

telligent annotation, was one of the greatest of our literary wants, will be readily admitted. This Mr. Robert Bell has undertaken to supply; whilst Mr. Parker performs his part of the compact in a manner to which the most fastidious cannot object, by issuing the edition in monthly volumes, which are a model of elegance, at so low a price, that the work, viewed in relation to the care and cost bestowed upon it, is one of the cheapest publications of the day.

As we write, some ten volumes of this edition have already appeared. It is too early a day to speak of the manner in which the duty of selection, generally, will be performed by Mr. Bell; but so far he has proceeded with judgment and discrimination. Mr. Bell's design is not merely to bring out the collected works of our principal English *poets*, weighing the claims of different aspirants to classic honours, as they have not been weighed by his predecessors, but to render his work also a complete collection of English *Poetry*. In other words, he purposes to embrace in his collection a large body of that scattered, and in some cases anonymous poetry, which is not less intrinsically excellent in itself, and has not had less influence upon the times, because it has not made the reputation, and is not historically associated with the name, of any particular man. Of the new insertions, the poems of John Oldham—a vigorous and a pungent satirist, well deserving resuscitation, may be accepted as a promising example; whilst the collection of *Songs of the Dramatists*,—the intrinsic excellence of which, however, we do not estimate quite so highly as Mr. Bell, is a pregnant instance of the careful, the conscientious, and the intelligent manner in which he is addressing himself to the performance of his difficult and responsible duty.

We have, indeed, a high opinion of the qualifications which Mr. Bell brings to his task. He is obviously a man of fine taste and cultivated mind, united with the steadier, and, we are afraid, rarer qualities, of laboriousness and conscientiousness. He is a discriminating, but at the same time a genial critic, a graceful writer, and an instructive commentator. A larger amount of cumbrous learning than he possesses would only be in his way. He is the reverse of a pedant; he has no exclusive sympathies, no narrow prejudices of any kind. He can admire and appreciate writers of the most opposite character. Here and there it is probable that the editorship of some one particular poet might more advantageously be entrusted to some particular living writer whom we might name; but we know no one among our contemporaries more likely to do justice to an edition of English Poets as a whole.

The edition before us is emphatically an "Annotated" edition

of the English Poets. It in no small measure founds its claims to popular support upon the accuracy and copiousness of the annotations it contains. The illustrative matter is indeed ample. It is of two kinds, introductory and marginal. Judging by the volumes now before us, we have little hesitation in pronouncing an opinion favourable to the manner in which this important part of the editor's duty has been performed. The notes are numerous, but not too numerous. They discharge their proper functions; for they explain, they do not encumber the text. That here and there a wrong word may have crept in, or a stop may have been misplaced, or a note omitted where one is to be desired, is something more than a probability, it appears indeed to us to be a *necessity* in such a work. It would require, indeed, superhuman intelligence, and superhuman labour, wholly to prevent the occurrence of such mischances as these. That they seldom occur in a work of such extent, demanding so rare a combination of many qualities in the individual workman, is honourable to the ability, the care, and the conscientiousness of the editor. The "Annotated" edition of the English Poets would be the greatest literary wonder of the age if no errors were discernible in it.

To the assaults of that lowest order of criticism—the word-catching, which lives on syllables—a work of this kind is sure to be exposed. Every critic knows something, or thinks that he knows something, about Dryden and Pope, Goldsmith and Cowper. Many hold opinions of their own, perhaps have some peculiar critical tenets, any variance from which they regard as an unpardonable heresy. Mere difference of opinion constitutes, in their eyes, an offence. They treat as settled points what are often open questions; and whilst dogmatically commenting upon another's errors, not seldom illustrate their own. Doubtless they have a right to their opinions, and they have a right freely to express them. But a large portion of the censure which is passed by periodical critics, upon such works as this, is in reality a mere expression of a difference of opinion, and ought rather to be delivered in a suggestive than a dogmatic tone. The acrimony of rival commentators is, however, proverbial. The *ineptissime dixit* is still the favourite critical formula which expresses the offence of an editor who interprets an obscure passage after a fashion differing from that which finds favour in the eyes of his critic. But these Brunckian amenities are not creditable to our periodical literature. With the editor of such a work as this every literary man should make common cause; all who have our national literature at heart should endeavour to assist his labours, and to contribute something towards the completeness of his work.

The edition of Cowper now before us, included in three of Mr. Bell's annotated volumes, may be taken as a fair specimen of the manner in which he is discharging his important duties. We do not conceive that the "bard of Olney" is one to the consideration of whose writings, and the illustration of whose career, a mind so constituted as is the editor's, is likely to bring so large an amount of enthusiasm and sympathy as to other poets whom we could name. But on that very account, we believe, that in selecting the annotated Cowper for the text of the present paper, we are dealing fairly with the work as a whole. We have no doubt that better specimens of genial and careful editing will appear in the series. Indeed, we regard the annotated Dryden, with which the series was commenced, as, on the whole, a better specimen of editorial skill. But we cannot hesitate to declare that there is no existing edition of Cowper's Poems, which we so much care to possess, as that which is now before us. It has one great advantage over all others,—that the poems are arranged according to the date of their composition, so that we have a complete picture of the development of the poetical faculty in William Cowper, and a history of the intellectual activity of the bard, at different periods of his life, at once in the most authentic and the most interesting shape. The introductory notes explanatory of the circumstances under which the different poems were written, and the influences to which the poet was exposed at the time of their composition, impart a vitality to the collection, which, taking all the pieces together, carries the reader on from one to another, and raises within him, as he advances, those emotions of sympathy which are inspired by the perusal of a vivid autobiography. It is a common remark, that the history of a poet's life is to be found in his works. But his poems, when collected, are often arranged in so clumsy a manner, or on so false a system, that they throw no light at all upon the progress of his inner life, or the development of his genius. Mindful of this, Mr. Bell has for the first time printed Cowper's Poems in chronological order; and it is difficult to say how much their interest is enhanced by such an arrangement.\*

In making frequent use of Cowper's unrivalled correspondence, the annotator has done wisely. But not less wisely in resisting

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\* "The Poems," says Mr. Bell, "are here printed, for the first time, in chronological order. It is believed that independently of other considerations, the interest connected with these pieces is much enhanced by this arrangement; especially in reference to the minor poems, which, being chiefly occasional, are to a great extent autobiographical. They enter into the history of Cowper's life; and a new light is thrown upon them, by exhibiting them in the order of the incidents to which they refer. The particular circumstances connected with their origin are explained in the introductions, and, wherever it is possible, in Cowper's own words, derived from his correspondence."

the temptation to a more liberal use of these materials for commentary. It would have been easy with a collection of Cowper's letters before him, for the editor to have multiplied note upon note. But such multiplication would have encumbered the text, and expanded the bulk of the work beyond convenient limits. It appears to us that we have just sufficient annotation, and no more, for a work that forms only a small component part of an extensive series.

The life of William Cowper has been written so often and so amply, that it was hardly to be expected that Mr. Bell should have much novel matter to introduce into the memoir which he has prefixed to the poems. It is a pleasant, a conscientious, and a reliable piece of writing; and with the introductory notes, affords a very complete picture of the life, the habits, and the character of the poet. There is a well-known peculiarity in the life of Cowper which distinguishes it from almost every other subject of biography. People are prone to ask, when a new biographer or new essayist enters upon it, "which side does he take?" The subject, indeed, has become a sort of literary battle-field—one, too, in which even larger interests than those of literature are concerned. The life of William Cowper has been written from very different points of view—one biographer regarding the views of another, to say the least of them, as dangerous heresies, and each having a large phalanx of supporters eager to condemn the work of his rival. Grimshawe wrote because he was not satisfied with Hayley; and Southey wrote because he was not satisfied with Grimshawe. Mr. Bell avoids both extremes. He is more moderate and candid than his predecessors. His sympathies are, perhaps, rather with Southey than with Grimshawe. But he has no theory to maintain. He treats of the results more than of the causes of Cowper's fearful maladies; and there is very *little* in his Memoir or his Notes to offend the prejudices of the most sensitive adherents of either party. If there be *anything*, it is rather in some casual expression, than in any studied assertion of opinion.

In truth it is a melancholy subject; but, after all, not so melancholy as some, it seems, would wish to make it. It would be the saddest thing of all to believe that so noble a mind was wrecked by that which is the very crown and perfection of human reason, and without which the intelligence of man, in its sublimest utterance, is but as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. That William Cowper was, at certain periods of his life, the victim of some miserable spiritual delusions, is a painful and undeniable fact. But these delusions were not the cause, but the effect of the derangement under which he suffered. It

has often been said that "religion drove him mad." But religion never yet drove any man mad. Even Mr. Bell, of whose candour we have spoken approvingly, seems to have fallen into this old error. Speaking of the composition of the *Olney Hymns*, he says, "A devotional labour of this peculiar description, calling him back into the solitude of study and composition, to *those spiritual meditations which had formerly unsettled his reason*, was full of danger to Cowper." But spiritual meditations did not unsettle Cowper's mind. His mind would have been unsettled had he been an atheist and a blasphemer. The only difference would have been in the manifestations of his disease.

Had Cowper lived and suffered half-a-century later, the terrible malady which, during so many years of his life, overshadowed his reason, would, in all probability, never have been a mystery, never a subject of contention between rival biographers and controversial essayists. The seat of the disease, whether in the brain or the *viscera*, would have been discovered: and we should have heard nothing of spiritual meditations unsettling the reason of the unfortunate poet. As it is, we can only grope about in dim twilight. The solution, it is true, is very easy; reason and analogy favour it—but at the best it is only conjecture. More or less of doubt and obscurity must always envelop a subject upon which in these days modern science would in all probability have thrown a flood of light.

The extent to which the diseases of the body, both organic and functional, affect the mind, is every year becoming better and better understood. Men are often victims of the most horrible delusions under the influence of a mere temporary derangement of the organs of digestion. We have no doubt that medical experience could cite scores of cases of mental aberration, analogous with that of Cowper, attended with corresponding symptoms of physical disease. In general terms it is said, and said truthfully, of the poet, that from his childhood upwards, he was constitutionally of a morbid temperament. It does not appear that there was any hereditary tendency to which the origin of his malady can be assigned, but that it was constitutional is not to be doubted. "I have all my life," he frequently said in his letters, "been subject to a disorder of my spirits." This commenced at a very early period. We cannot quite follow Mr. Grimshawe in the inference which he draws from some of the well-known lines "On the receipt of my mother's picture out of Norfolk," to the effect that even before his mother's death Cowper was subject to depression of spirits. "That a morbid temperament," says the biographer,

“was the originating cause of his depression, is confirmed by an affecting passage in one of his poems:—

“‘ My mother! when I learnt that thou wast dead,  
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?  
Hovered thy spirit o’er thy sorrowing son,  
Wretch even then, life’s journey just begun.’ ”

But the meaning of this passage is not that Cowper was a “wretch” antecedently to the death of his mother, but that that event made him a wretch even at the beginning of “life’s journey.” His sorrows seem then to have commenced. There is nothing in the passage to lead us to the conclusion that they had commenced *before*.

He might truly date his sorrows from that melancholy epoch. It is not improbable, indeed, that he owed them all to his untimely bereavement. He was a child of a delicate organization, and he required, therefore, the gentlest treatment and the most watchful care. Instead of enjoying these advantages, he was subjected, in early childhood, to discipline of a very opposite nature. His father, the rector of Berkhamstead, on the death of Mrs. Cowper, sent William to school. The delicate, sensitive boy was “taken,” as he said, “from the nursery, and from the immediate care of a most indulgent mother,” and sent to “rough it,” as best he might, among strangers.

Where Bedfordshire abuts into Hertfordshire, at a point of the great high road, between St. Albans and Dunstable, is a long straggling village or townlet, known by the name of Market Street.\* Now that the North-Western Railway runs at no great distance, almost parallel with this road, the place has a wan, deserted, melancholy appearance. But once the now silent “Street” continually resounded with the smackings of the post-boy’s whip, and the notes of the coachman’s horn, and there was something of bustle and excitement, as there was at that time in many places, once the great arteries of our traffic, but now almost without a pulse of life. In this pulseless Market Street, there was a school kept by one Dr. Pitman; and thither, at the age of six, William Cowper, motherless and forlorn, was sent to “make his way,” as it is called, against the “rolling sea” of birch and bullies.

And many a boy would have made his way against both. But poor little Cowper could not make his way at all. All the little

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\* Southey, in his *Life of Cowper*, has been at some pains to shew the conflicting testimonies of different writers regarding the geographical position of Dr. Pitman’s school—some having placed it in Bedfordshire, and some in Hertfordshire—and says truly enough, that the poet was only at *one* private school. A glance at the maps of the two counties might have assured him of the cause of the seeming discrepancy.

nerve which he carried with him to Market Street was battered out of him by a big boy, who seems to have made it his especial business to cow one who needed little discipline of any kind to bring him to a fitting state of subjection. "I had hardships of different kinds to conflict with," he wrote in after life with reference to this early training, "which I felt more sensibly in proportion to the tenderness with which I had been treated at home. But my chief affliction consisted in my being singled out from all the other boys by a lad about fifteen years of age, as a proper object on whom he might let loose the cruelty of his temper. I choose to forbear a particular recital of the many acts of barbarity with which he made it his business continually to persecute me; it will be sufficient to say, that he had by his savage treatment of me, impressed such a dread of his figure on my mind, that I well remember being afraid to lift up my eyes upon him, higher than his knees; and that I knew him by his shoe-buckles better than any other part of his dress." Commenting upon this passage, a portion of which Mr. Bell quotes in his introductory memoir, he observes, that to the brutality of this boy's character, and the general impression left upon Cowper's mind by the tyranny he had undergone at Dr. Pitman's, may be referred "the unfavourable opinion he entertained respecting schools, so forcibly expressed in the poem entitled *Tirocinium, or a Review of Schools*."

Of this there is no doubt: but might not something more have been added—might not something more have been referred to the tyranny of the big bully at Dr. Pitman's? It would be hardly possible for a child of delicate organization to undergo such treatment as little William Cowper was subjected to at the bad school in Market Street, without some abiding consequences affecting his physical or moral health—or both. What the precise nature of this treatment was does not appear. But no one knowing the many forms which school-boy cruelty assumes can doubt for a moment that it is quite sufficient to sow broadcast, in such a constitution as little Cowper's, the seeds of that melancholy disease which overshadowed so many of the best years of his life. We are sorry to say, that there are many cases on record of similar evil treatment, attended with effects of the same melancholy nature.

Not, however, that we regard such an instance of tyranny on the one side, and suffering on the other, as anything more than an exceptional case. There has been more than a common outcry of late against "fagging systems," "monitorial systems," and other kinds of schoolboy domination. But we have no disposition to swell the chorus. We suspect that there are not many men, whether educated at public or at private schools,

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who are not willing to speak feelingly, affectionately, gratefully, of the kindness shewn towards them by older boys. There is something almost parental in the tender care and chivalrous protection, which we have seen extended to the young and helpless at the scholastic institutions which Cowper conceived to be nurseries of vice and hot-beds of oppression. When the result is different, it is for the most part to be attributed to the unfitness of the preceptor. In large public schools it may be difficult to exercise a direct influence over this branch of internal discipline; but in such establishments as Dr. Pitman's nothing can be easier. The master has nothing more to do, when a young and tender child is entrusted to his care, than to place him immediately under the protection of one of the elder boys. The more openly, *coram populo*, it is done the better. Such a trust is sure not to be betrayed. We have known the happiest results to attend such a practice as this. The chivalrous feelings of the elder boy are stimulated by such an appeal to his manliness. He is proud of the charge. He rejoices in the confidence reposed in him by his master; and he studies to prove himself worthy of it. He soon learns how much pleasanter it is to protect and to cherish than to domineer and to oppress; and he has his reward in the almost filial reverence and affection with which he is looked up to, and leant upon by his youthful client.

Such kindly, judicious management as this might have saved poor Cowper. As it was, we can hardly doubt that during his residence at Dr. Pitman's the seeds of his terrible malady were sown. From the school in Market Street he was removed to the house of an oculist, where he remained for some time, under treatment for a disease of the eyes. A dreary time in all probability it was—with nothing strengthening or refreshing in the environments of his position, but much to enervate and depress. From this isolation he was thrown at once into the tumult of a public school. At the age of nine he went to Westminster. "At twelve or thirteen" he was "seized with the small-pox,"—"severely handled by the disease and in imminent danger." The virulence of the disorder cured the complaint in his eyes, but left behind what Cowper believed to be symptoms of consumption.\* That it very much increased the irritability under

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\* In the Memoir of Cowper's early life, written by himself, these apprehensions of a consumptive habit are mentioned before the appearance of the small-pox. But the narrative of his school-days is briefly written in very general language, and the allusion to the consumptive symptoms may belong to any period of his Westminster career. As the attack of small-pox occurred at the age of twelve or thirteen; and he says, with reference to the "intimations of a consumptive habit," that he had skill enough to understand their meaning, they are more likely to have occurred after than before that age.

which he suffered, and still further weakened an already weakly constitution, is not to be questioned. At this time, he says, he was "struck with a lowness of spirits very uncommon at his age." As time advanced, however, his position at Westminster necessarily improved. The most reserved and retiring boy cannot spend nine years at a public school without acquiring some confidence in himself. As he grew older, and necessarily more respected by reason of his seniority, he became more self-possessed. He formed many friendships. He took part in the active recreations of the school. These social enjoyments exercised a salutary influence upon both his body and his mind. It does not appear that during the latter years of his residence at Westminster he was otherwise than healthy and happy.

At the age of eighteen he was "taken from Westminster, and, having spent about nine months at home, was sent to acquire the practice of the law with an attorney." On attaining his majority, he took a set of chambers in the Temple, and was "complete master of himself." Here, according to his own statement, he commenced "a rash and ruinous career of wickedness." Who could doubt the effect of dissipation upon his irritable constitution? Not long after his settlement in the Temple he was "struck with such a dejection of spirits, as none but they who have felt the same can have the least conception of." "Day and night," he said, "I was upon the rack, lying down in horror and rising up in despair." In this state he "continued near a twelvemonth, when, having experienced the inefficacy of all human means, he at length betook himself to God in prayer." He had not, however, tried the effect of "all human means." Change of air and scene was subsequently recommended him, and he went to Southampton with a party of friends, and spent several months at that pleasant watering-place. It need not be said that the change had a prodigious effect upon his health and his spirits. One clear, calm, sunshiny morning, as he sat on a hill-side, and looked down upon the beautiful expanse of sea and land beneath him, the burden which had so long oppressed him was suddenly removed, and he felt an elation of spirit so delicious that he could have wept for joy. This is no unwonted phenomenon. Nor is it a bit more strange that, finding himself so much better in health and lighter in mood, he should have ceased from those spiritual exercises to which he had betaken himself in a season of sickness and despondency. These mutations are so common, that they have passed into a proverb, contained in a somewhat irreverent distich, to which we need not more particularly allude.

He went back to town, gave himself up to society, and what he afterwards perhaps in somewhat overstrained language of

self-reproach, described as "an uninterrupted course of sinful indulgence. The kind of life, however, could not have had a very beneficial effect upon his nerves. He was disappointed, too, in his affections. He was tenderly attached to his cousin Theodora Cowper; and the passion was reciprocated. But the prudent parents—

With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart— forbade the union; and the cousins remained single unto death. Whether this "disappointment," which he made the subject of a poem, had any abiding effect upon his spirits, does not very clearly appear. Mr. Southey and Mr. Bell both think that it did not—quoting in confirmation of this opinion a Latin letter written subsequently to the failure of his suit, in which he speaks of "a lovely and beloved little girl" of sixteen, who had bewitched him at Greenwich. In our estimation, however, the argument based upon this passage is of no weight. The Latin letter appears to us to be nothing more than a bit of amusing badinage. Surely his account of the "*amabilis et amata puellula*," whose departure left behind so many "*lachrymas et suspiria*," was never meant to be received as the expression of a serious passion. Considering that he addressed his correspondent, a brother Templar, as "*Deliciæ et lepores mei*!" it is not very difficult to make allowance for the classical bombast wherein he speaks of his female friend. The Latin letter is curious and amusing; but it throws no light upon the real character of Cowper's love. His disappointment was, probably, one of many aggravating causes, which tended to increase his nervous irritability at this time; and we have little doubt, that if the issue had been different—if he had been united to a sensible, an amiable, and a sprightly woman, the clouds would not have gathered over him in such appalling density.

A crisis was now, indeed, rapidly approaching. Cowper's little patrimony was fast melting away under the influence of a life of continued idleness. In this emergency he remembered that he had some influential friends; and he bethought himself of the possibility of obtaining a situation under Government. The office of Clerk of the Journals of the House of Lords was in the gift of his kinsman, Major Cowper. The incumbent died, seemingly at an opportune moment; and about the same time the joint offices of reading clerk and clerk of the committees were vacated by resignation. Major Cowper, who was patentee of these appointments, made his cousin an offer of "the two most profitable places"—in other words, the joint office—and the latter thoughtlessly accepted it. On reflection, however, the idea of a public exhibition in the House of Lords quite overcame him,

and he sought permission to exchange his office for the less lucrative post of clerk of the journals. The exchange was effected, but the object was not obtained. Cowper was "bid to expect an examination at the bar of the House touching his sufficiency for the post he had taken." The thought of such an exhibition was so appalling, that in time it overthrew his reason.

There is nothing very astonishing in this. There are many men—men, too, in other respects not wanting in courage and confidence—who would rather forfeit a lucrative appointment than make a public exhibition of themselves, and stand an examination before such a tribunal as the House of Lords. It may be asked, then, why Cowper could not relieve his mind at once by throwing up the appointment? The answer is, that his abandonment of the office would have been a confession of incompetency, and that such a confession would have compromised his kinsman. He endeavoured, therefore, to qualify and to brace himself up for the threatened examination. It need not be said how hopeless are all such attempts. It would have been nothing short of a miracle if he had succeeded. Had his organization been far less delicate—had he never been subject to an excess of nervous irritability almost amounting to insanity—the experiment would have disastrously failed. As it was, the horror of the impending trial only increased upon him. The more he struggled to obtain light, the more hopeless was the darkness. It is unnecessary to enter into any details illustrative of this miserable period of Cowper's life. All the frightful circumstances are fully on record, as narrated by the poet himself. His excessive anxiety brought on a "nervous fever," which was somewhat allayed by a visit to Margate, where change of scene and cheerful company enabled him for a while to shake off his terrors. But on returning to London and the journals his old misery came back upon him, and he was more grievously tormented than before. He saw no escape from his agony, but madness or death. The former, as he thought, came too slowly, so he took refuge in the latter. He bought laudanum to poison himself. He went down to the Custom-House quay to drown himself. Finally, he hanged himself in his Chambers; but falling to the ground, just as strangulation was commencing, he was baffled in this last attempt. He seems then to have awakened to a sense of his guilt. But mind and body, thus cruelly exercised—thus rent and shattered and convulsed, were now giving way. It was impossible that they could much longer withstand this continued tension. "A numbness," he wrote in his own painful Memoir of these sad events, "seized upon the extremities of my body, and life seemed to retreat before it; my hands and feet became cold and stiff; a cold sweat stood upon my forehead;

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my heart seemed at every pulse to beat its last, and my soul to cling to my lips as if on the very brink of departure. No convicted criminal ever feared death more, or was more afraid of dying. At eleven o'clock, my brother called upon me, and in about an hour after his arrival, that distemper of mind which I had so ardently wished for actually seized me. . . . A strange and horrible darkness fell upon me. If it were possible that a heavy blow could light upon the brain, without touching the skull, such was the sensation I felt."

He was conveyed to a private Asylum, kept at St. Albans by Dr. Nathaniel Cotton, an excellent and accomplished man. His mental alienation was of the most terrible, but not the most uncommon kind. After what had happened, it was almost a necessary consequence that his insanity should be of the gloomiest type, and that he should believe himself beyond the pale of salvation. Under the judicious treatment of Dr. Cotton, however, he slowly recovered. His terrible delusions began in time to clear away; and after eighteen months spent in the St. Albans Asylum, he was sufficiently restored to be removed to Huntingdon, where a lodging had been secured for him by his brother. His spirit was becoming every day more tranquil. He found solace in prayer. He attended divine service. His heart was full of unspeakable gratitude and joy. The goodness of God was the continual theme of his meditations. At Huntingdon he made the acquaintance of the Unwins. The family consisted of Mr. Unwin, a non-resident clergyman; his wife; a son, intended for holy orders; and a daughter, whom Cowper described as "rather handsome and genteel." How this acquaintance ripened into intimacy, and how Cowper became an inmate of the Unwins' house, is too well known to need recital. He seems at this period of his life to have been happy and cheerful. He took sufficient exercise—even riding upon horseback. He wrote, indeed, that he had "become a professed horseman;" and nothing was better calculated to strengthen his health and cheer his spirits. But a melancholy accident brought this peaceful interval of life to a close. Mr. Unwin was thrown from his horse and killed.

How the survivors—that is how Mrs. Unwin and Cowper determined not to forsake each other, but to dwell together and to administer to each other's wants, is known to all who are acquainted with even the merest outline of the poet's life. Of this curious compact, which Mr. Bell truly describes as "an exceptional case, not to be judged by ordinary standards," we purpose to offer no opinion, further than that, beautiful as was the constancy of the friendship which was so long maintained between them, the union was in some respects unfortunate in its results to both.

But the most unfortunate thing of all was the choice of their residence. They were attracted to Olney—a small townlet on the banks of the Ouse, in Buckinghamshire—by that remarkable man, Mr. Newton, who, then at the commencement of his distinguished evangelical career, was acting as curate of the parish. He recommended Mrs. Unwin to remove to Olney, and offered to secure a house for her. To this she readily assented, and her companion willingly ratified the choice.

So in the autumn of 1767, Cowper went to live at Olney. It would have been difficult to select, from one end of the kingdom to another, a more unfortunate place of residence for a nervous invalid. The house itself resembled a prison. The principal sitting room was over a cellar filled with water. The surrounding country was low, damp, miasmatic. During several months of the year it was almost impossible to go out of doors. There was no pleasant neighbourly society. All the influences, external and internal, to which he was subjected at this time, were enervating and depressing; and they abundantly fed his disease. A slow fever began gradually to consume both Cowper and his companion, but although they suffered miserably from its effects, it was long before they began thoroughly to understand the cause.

But they saw the whole extent of the mischief at last, as the following passages of a letter to Mrs. Unwin's son, clearly indicate. Need we look any further for the source of Cowper's sufferings at Olney?—

“When you first contemplated,” he wrote, “the front of our abode, you were shocked. In your eyes it had the appearance of a prison; and you sighed at the thought that your mother lived in it. Your view of it was not only just, but prophetic. It had not only the aspect of a place built for the purposes of incarceration, but it has actually served that purpose through a long, long period, and we have been the prisoners. . . . Here we have no neighbourhood. . . . Here we have a bad air in winter, impregnated with the fishy-smelling fumes of the marsh miasma. . . . Here we are confined from September to March, and sometimes longer. . . . Both your mother's constitution and mine have suffered materially by such close and long confinement; and it is high time, unless we intend to retreat into the grave, that we should seek out a more wholesome residence.”

In another letter, addressed to Mr. Newton, he wrote:—

“A fever of the slow and spirit-oppressing kind seems to belong to all except the natives, who have dwelt in Olney many years; and the natives have putrid fevers. Both they and we, I believe, are immediately indebted for our respective maladies to an atmosphere encumbered with raw vapours issuing from flooded meadows; and we

in particular, have fared the worse for sitting so often, and sometimes for weeks, over a cellar filled with water."

To the evil effects of climate and situation, far more than to the companionship of Mr. Newton, and to the pursuits into which he was led by that exemplary divine, are we to attribute the return of his malady. Mr. Bell, with the highest respect for Newton's character, is, however, of a different opinion.—

"The change to Olney," he says, "materially disturbed the tranquillity which Cowper had hitherto enjoyed, and which was so essential to his mental health. The calm daily prayers of Huntingdon, which shed a balm upon his spirit, that at once strengthened and composed him, were displaced by more frequent evangelical worship; prayer meetings were established in the parish, at which Cowper actually assisted; he was called upon to visit the sick; to pray by the bedside of the dying; to investigate the condition of the poor of a populous and extensive parish, and to administer to their wants, which he was enabled to do by a fund placed at his disposal by Mr. Thornton, a rich merchant; and drawn gradually into the duties of a spiritual adviser, he exchanged the quiet and the leisure of the last few years,—the cheerful conversation, the mid-day relaxation, the evening walk, for the onerous and agitating labours of a sort of lay curate to Mr. Newton. The effect of this change on a delicate organization, already shattered by a disease, which the slightest excitement, especially of a religious character, was likely to bring back, could not be otherwise than injurious."

To this we cannot but ask in reply, "Is it so?"

— Is it so, Festus?

He speaks so calmly and wisely—is it so?

Our own belief is, that visiting the poor and relieving their wants is anything but a dreary and depressing occupation; and that "quiet and leisure" were not precisely what Cowper most wanted. What he wanted was active occupation,—occupation both for body and mind; something, too, to draw him out of himself. The contemplation of such scenes as he witnessed in the houses of the poor, as Newton's lay curate, must have largely awakened that sympathy with others' sufferings, which more than anything else perhaps, saves a man from dwelling upon his own. We are not sure that if we were called upon to prescribe for the worst forms of hypochondriasis, we should not recommend the sufferer to fill his purse and go out to visit the poor. Such an occupation must in itself have been salutary even in Cowper's case.\* But it was not sufficient to counteract

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\* We are entirely of opinion, however, that it was extremely injudicious to call upon Cowper—to whom a public exhibition of himself was, as he himself said, in any state, mortal poison—to take an active and outward part in the prayer

the other evil influences of which we have spoken. The marsh miasma of Olney was doing its sure work upon Cowper's irritable constitution. He was continually inhaling the slow poison of the place. A nervous fever was preying upon him. "Having suffered so much by nervous fevers myself," he wrote in 1776, "I know how to congratulate Ashley on his recovery. Other distempers only batter the walls; but *they* creep silently into the citadel, and put the garrison to the sword." It need not be explained to the dullest reader, that the citadel here spoken of is the head,—*arx formæ facies*,—and that the garrison is the brain, or the reason. We have here therefore a distinct avowal of Cowper's opinion that his reason was destroyed by the operation of nervous fever; and we have already cited an equally distinct recognition of the fact, that his nervous fever was mainly occasioned by the unhealthiness of the climate of Olney. The same atmospheric poison acts differently upon different constitutions. It has, however, one general rule of action. It attacks the weakest place. It lodges itself wherever there is a predisposition to receive it. We need take no trouble to explain why the fever which in the poorer class of inhabitants assumed a putrid type, should in one so organized as William Cowper attack the nerves and affect the brain.

When he wrote about "the nervous fever" creeping silently into the citadel, he had been nine years resident at Olney, the three last of which had been passed under the influence of the most terrible depression. Still for three years longer he continued under the same influence, but considerably mitigated by time. In 1776 the fury of the storm had expended itself, and in 1779 it had well-nigh blown over. He said afterwards, that he did not quite lose his senses, but that he lost the power of exercising them. "I could return," he said, "a rational answer to a difficult question; but a question was necessary, or I never spoke at all. This state of mind was accompanied, as I suppose it to be in most instances of the kind, with misapprehensions of things and persons, which made me a very untractable patient. I believed that everybody hated me, and that Mrs. Unwin hated me most of all; was convinced that all my food was poisoned, together with ten thousand vagaries of the same stamp." There is nothing here that may not be—indeed, that has not been—clearly traced to derangement of the physical constitution. But the disease was suffered to make progress under a mistaken sense of its import, until the enemy could with

meetings of Olney. Mr. Greathead, who preached his funeral sermon, said, "I have heard him say, that when expected to take the lead in this social worship, his mind was always greatly agitated for some hours preceding."

difficulty be dislodged. Southey says that Mr. Newton and Mrs. Unwin, being clearly of opinion that their poor friend was torn by an unclean spirit, would not for many months seek that professional aid which before had been exercised with such salutary results.

During the season of his slow recovery, he amused himself by taming hares, carpentering, gardening, and painting landscapes; and when, in 1780, his mind seemed to have recovered its original strength, it was suggested to him that he would do well to cultivate his poetical powers. He frequently wrote slight occasional pieces; and now he was stimulated to more sustained efforts by the affectionate solicitude of his friends. They sent him to court the muses not in search of fame, but of health.

Suffering, indeed, made him a poet, as it has made many others. "Encompassed by the midnight of absolute despair," he wrote long afterwards to Mr. Newton, "and a thousand times filled with unspeakable horror, I first commenced as an author. Distress drove me to it; and the impossibility of subsisting without some employment still recommends it." But there was something wanted to give effect to the proposed remedy. Cowper himself well knew what it was. In the poem of "Retirement," he significantly says—

"Virtuous and faithful Heberden, whose skill  
Attempts no task it cannot well fulfil,  
Gives melancholy up to Nature's care,  
And sends the patient into purer air."

Cowper ought to have been removed from Olney on the first appearance of his malady. But he remained there, throughout nineteen long years—at the end of which it had become intolerable to him. It is probable, however, that he would not have had sufficient energy and resolution to effect a change, but for a circumstance which in the course of the year 1786 exercised a happy influence over the remainder of his life. In that year his cousin Lady Hesketh, with whom he had been in a familiar and affectionate correspondence for a quarter of a century, arrived, on a visit, at Olney. She brought an admirable physician with her, in the shape of a carriage and horses; and Cowper, who had been, for many years, literally incarcerated in a dreary prison-house, with a companion who, like himself, was wasting away under the destroying influences to which they were both subjected at Olney, was prevailed upon to accompany his cousin on her pleasant rural drives, and was wonderfully refreshed by the recreation. She was in all respects, too, a most delightful companion. Her presence made sunshine in that shady place on the banks of the Ouse. Even

in his letters to Mr. Newton, Cowper could not refrain from chanting her praises in a full swell of gratitude:—

“Lady Hesketh,” wrote the poet, “by her affectionate behaviour, the cheerfulness of her conversation, and the constant sweetness of her temper, has cheered us both, and Mrs. Unwin not less than me. By her help we get change of air and scene, though still resident at Olney, and by her means have intercourse with some families in this country, with whom but for her we could never have been acquainted. Her presence here would at any time, even in my happiest days, have been a comfort to me, but in the present day I am doubly sensible of its value. She leaves nothing unsaid, nothing undone, that she thinks will be conducive to our wellbeing; and so far as she is concerned, I have nothing to wish, but that I could believe her sent hither in mercy to myself, then I should be thankful.”

Lady Hesketh saw, at the first glance, the fatal mistake that had been committed, when Cowper and Mrs. Unwin were prevailed upon to fix their residence in the Olney Bastile. They needed little persuasion or encouragement to induce them to remove to a more cheerful abode, though without *any*, they would probably have continued to stagnate in the old place. Lady Hesketh's warnings were quite sufficient to fix the resolution of both. In the course of June, Cowper wrote to his old friend Joseph Hill—the “honest man close buttoned to the chin,” of the well-known “Epistle,”—that he had determined to break his chains. “Olney,” he said, “will not be much longer the place of our habitation. At a village two miles distant (Weston Underwood) we have hired a house of Mr. Throckmorton. . . . It is situated very near to our most agreeable landlord and his agreeable pleasure grounds. In him and his wife we shall find such companions as will always make the time pass pleasantly whilst they are in the country, and his grounds will afford us good air and walking-room in the winter—two advantages which we have not enjoyed at Olney, where I have no neighbours with whom I can converse, and where seven months in the year I have been imprisoned by dirty and impassable ways, till both my health and Mrs. Unwin's have suffered materially.” Many passages of similar import might be drawn from Cowper's letters; but after what we have already written, we need not pile up evidence to prove, that when the Olney house was selected for his residence, it was written down against him that he should never again enjoy a continuance of physical or mental health.

In November 1786, Cowper and Mrs. Unwin removed themselves to Weston. He was charmed with his new abode. He wrote playfully that the change was as great as “from St. Giles

to Grosvenor Square." *But it had come too late.* Those nineteen dreary years in the Olney prison-house had done their sure work both upon Cowper and upon Mrs. Unwin. He had been fast subsiding again into a state of depression, when Lady Hesketh had arrived to cheer him; but although her presence delayed the attack, she could not wholly avert it; and he had not been many weeks settled at Weston when the fever which he had brought with him from Olney began to assert itself, and with it came his old despondency. The evil was perhaps precipitated by a calamity which befell the two invalids at this time. "Hardly," he wrote, "had we begun to enjoy the change, when the death of Mrs. Unwin's son cast a gloom upon every thing." This exemplary man was fondly loved by Cowper, and his unexpected death was a heavy blow to him. It fell, too, at an inopportune moment, and, doubtless, evolved the crisis which otherwise change of scene might have retarded for a time. As the year commenced he felt the fever creeping in his veins. "I have had a little nervous fever, my dear," he wrote to Lady Hesketh, "that has somewhat abridged my sleep." A few days afterwards, writing to Mr. Newton, he said with reference to another's trials, "I have no doubt it is distemper. But distresses of mind that are occasioned by distemper, are the most difficult of all to deal with." He knew this but too well, for it was his own case. To Lady Hesketh, too, he wrote again on the 18th of January, "My fever is not yet gone; but sometimes seems to leave me. It is altogether of the nervous kind, and attended now and then with much dejection." The ink with which this was written was scarcely dry, when the storm burst over him in all its fury. A terrible darkness fell upon him, which continued throughout many months. His agony was so extreme, that again he sought refuge in death. But for the timely interposition of Mrs. Unwin, he would have been laid in the suicide's grave.

In July he suddenly awoke, as it were, from a terrible dream, and returned to his usual avocations. He devoted himself to his translation of Homer, and seems to have fallen into the error of applying himself too closely to study. He took little exercise, and seldom went beyond the limits of his own and his neighbour's grounds. "I stay much at home," he wrote, "and have not travelled twenty miles from this place and its environs more than once these twenty years." His health and his spirits were subject to considerable fluctuations. Even the improved situation of Weston could not dislodge the enemy, which for nearly twenty years had been creeping into the "citadel." Nor was Mrs. Unwin more fortunate. Her health had long utterly failed her. Her faculties were becom-

ing clouded. Extraordinary delusions possessed them both. At last, in the winter of 1791, the poor lady was stricken down by paralysis; and from that time, though every effort was made to rally her, and she even consented to accompany Cowper on a visit to Hayley, at Eastham, in Sussex, she continued to grow more and more imbecile, until it was plain that she was totally incompetent to manage the affairs of her household. It need not be said that the melancholy sight of his poor friend's infirmity, which was continually before him, had the worst possible effect on the poet's mind. In 1794 he was in a pitiable state. He refused medicine; he refused food. He was continually pacing his room, backwards and forwards, like a beast in a cage. Dr. Willis was sent for and did all that his unequalled skill could accomplish. But such interposition was too late. Lady Hesketh attended on him, and ministered to his wants with the most sisterly assiduity, but nothing could raise him from the hopeless dejection in which he was sunk.

In the summer of 1795 it had become obviously necessary to make some new arrangements for the disposal of the two sufferers; and it happened fortunately that at this time Dr. Johnson of North Tuddenham, a young relative of Cowper's, who united with a sound judgment the highest rectitude of conduct and the most unfailing kindness of heart, expressed his eagerness to take charge of them; and they were quietly removed to Norfolk. He watched over their declining years as though they had been his parents. Nothing could have been more judicious than the treatment to which Cowper was subjected, but, as we have said before, it was too late. Such transient signs of revival as manifested themselves in Norfolk only indicated what might have been done at an earlier stage. In December 1796, Mrs. Unwin died. Cowper being taken to see the corpse, burst out into a passionate exclamation of sorrow, but left the sentence unfinished, and never spoke of his friend again.

He survived her more than three years, but they were years of suffering, bodily and mental. The low fever which had clung so tormentingly to him was now preying on his very vitals. "The process of digestion," we are told, "never passed regularly in his frame;" and "medicine had no influence upon his complaint." The only marvel is, that thus hopelessly prostrated he so long continued to live. "Frequent change of place, and the magnificence of marine scenery," even then, however, "produced a little relief to his depressed spirit." The remedy, indeed, was being applied when he could no longer profit by it. In 1799, his corporeal strength was rapidly declining, and early in the following year it was plain that his dissolution was close at hand. As his end approached he does not seem to have gained serenity of mind. The terrible delusions which had so long

clung to him were not now to be shaken off. He expressed, indeed, no hope to the last; but when, on the 25th of April, 1800, his soul was released from its shattered tenement, the affectionate relative who had so tenderly watched over the last dark years of the poet, thought that he could see on the face of William Cowper "an expression of calmness and composure, mingled, as it were, with holy surprise."

Painful as is this story, it is not an unintelligible one; we believe, indeed, that it is not an uncommon one. The celebrity of the poet has imparted to it an interest and a notoriety, which do not belong to others, presenting the same features to the eye of the professional observer. These nineteen years at Olney, viewed in connexion with the melancholy antecedents of Cowper's life, were sufficient to account for anything that occurred after he took up his abode in that dreary Bastile on the banks of the Ouse. A dry, bracing air, cheerful society, regular exercise, (if possible on horseback,) occasional change of scene, and good medical advice, might have restored him to health and happiness. This is no vague conjecture. He had himself the strongest possible conviction that these were the remedies he required; and whenever the effect of any one of them was accidentally tried, he greatly improved both in health and spirits. As it was, with everything to poison the body and depress the mind, mind and body were continually acting reciprocally one upon the other, until disease was so firmly established in both, that all hope of cure was at an end.

That one—the chief, indeed, of Cowper's delusions, should be an insurmountable belief that God had turned away His face from him, and that the Redeemer had not died for him, seems to be an almost necessary result of the miserable circumstances which preceded his first attack of madness. So profound, indeed, was his mental darkness—so complete the entanglement and confusion of his ideas, during these awful periods of insanity—that he believed that God had totally and finally rejected him because he had *not* committed suicide. He read everything backward; he saw everywhere the reverse side of things. To base any theory upon these grotesque figments of a disordered brain were clearly absurd. The greatest of our female poetesses \* has beautifully and aptly compared this aberration with the wanderings of a fever-stricken child, who calls aloud for his mother, whilst her kind eyes are bent upon him:—

"Like a sick child that knoweth not his mother whilst she blesses,  
And drops upon his burning brow the coolness of her kisses;  
That turns his fevered eyes around, 'My mother—where's my mother?'  
As if such tender words and looks could come from any other."

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\* Mrs. Browning.

Indeed, Cowper's despair was but a fever-born delusion; in his healthier hours his religion was eminently cheerful:—

“The fever gone with leaps of heart, he sees her bending o'er him;  
Her face all pale from watchful love, the unwearied love she bore him!  
Thus woke the poet from the dream his life's long fever gave him,  
Beneath those deep pathetic eyes which closed in death to save him.

Thus? oh, not thus! no type of earth could image that awaking,  
Wherein he scarcely heard the chant of seraphs round him breaking,  
Or felt the new immortal throb of soul from body parted;  
But felt those eyes alone, and knew, ‘My Saviour! not deserted!’”

He knew, indeed, that he was “not deserted.” When the enemy was not “in the citadel” he was hopeful and assured. He lived in a state of habitual thankfulness. His familiar letters sparkle with playful humour. They are the pleasantest and the most genial ever written. They indicate, for the most part, a mind at peace with itself, and a heart full of tenderness towards others. With few exceptions, they declare in every sentence the gentle loveable nature, the cheerful philosophy, and the sound good sense of the poet. For it was Cowper's hard fate, when the malady was upon him, to belie himself in every essential particular. A terrible disguise obscured all the realities of his natural self. The loving grateful heart, the clear reason, the hopeful piety, all yielded to the assaults of the insidious fever; and he became, under its domineering influence, morose, fanciful, desponding—mistrustful alike of God and of man.

How complete the inversion was is apparent to every reader, who studies in immediate connexion with each other the life and the works of William Cowper. If there be one characteristic of his poetry more remarkable than any other, it is the sound good sense which informs it. He is, indeed, the sanest of our poets. Of “fine frenzy” in his writings there is little or none. Perhaps there is no collection in the language less likely, on its own merits, to be attributed to a “mad poet.” He was of a school the very antithesis of the spasmodic. It is the rationality, indeed, of Cowper's poems, which has rendered them so acceptable to the people of England. He had seen little of men, and was not very largely acquainted with books. But his strong natural sense, and his extraordinary keenness of observation, enabled him to triumph over these deficiencies, and there are many passages in his longer poems which have all the appearance of having been written by a well-read man of the world.

It was said by William Hazlitt, we believe, that there are “only three books worth looking into for a quotation—the Old Testament, Shakspeare, and Wordsworth's *Excursion*.” To these might certainly have been added, “The Poems of William

Cowper." With the single exception of Shakspeare, there is no poet more frequently quoted by his countrymen. He is, perhaps, more quoted than read. Many brief passages in his writings have become "familiar as household words," and are passed about from one mouth to another by men who cannot trace the lines or couplets to their true paternity. It is the simple intelligible truth of these passages that fixes them so firmly on the popular memory, and renders them so easy of reproduction. If they were more poetical, or more profound, they would be less current amongst us.

The sustained popularity of Cowper's writings is a fact very creditable to Englishmen. Within the last few months three new and handsome editions of his poems have been contemporaneously appearing. He is emphatically an English poet; he represents, indeed, the best side of the English character; but he is entirely and exclusively English. No other country could have produced such a poet; and in no other country would he have been equally popular. We take him to our hearths fearlessly, trustfully. There is scarcely a library in the kingdom containing a hundred volumes in which Cowper has no place. His poems are the earliest which English children learn by rote. They are food alike for tender nurslings and for strong men. We may not be very enthusiastic over them. They do not excite us to any prodigious heights of admiration,—perhaps they do not often stir any profound depths of emotion within us; but we always approve, we always trust, we always sympathize with, we always love, we are always grateful to the poet. It is the proud distinction of William Cowper that he never led any man astray—that no one ever studied his writings without being wiser and better for the study—that no English parent in his sound senses ever hesitated, or ever will hesitate, to place Cowper's poems in the hands of his child.

We are thankful that there is a sufficiency of good healthy English taste and feeling amongst us to keep alive the popularity of such writers as William Cowper. We are not unmindful of the claims of poets of another class. They write under different influences, and they have their reward. Even the writers of what is now called the "spasmodic school" are entitled to some consideration, and may be too severely handled. But let what schools may rise and fall—come jauntily into fashion for a little while, to be hooted down as quickly.—the good English thought and English diction of William Cowper will still keep their place amongst us; and still as we speak reverently and affectionately of him who did so much to swell the happiness of others, but could never secure his own, it will be our boast that the most English of our poets was emphatically the most Christian.





Dryden



that he was to become, like Kaunitz, "the coachman of Europe," and keep the reins for nearly forty years. Stein pronounced him "vain, cunning, shallow, and frivolous," and despised the assiduity with which Metternich arranged *tableaux vivans*, and ranged the ladies who were to take part in them, at the very moment when momentous conferences were going forward. But while Metternich was playing the lady's man, he was acquiring his diplomatic accomplishments, in which he was avowedly both a pupil and a utilizer of women. When ambassador at Paris, in 1808, his first achievement was to win the favour of Caroline Murat, Napoleon's favourite sister. The Emperor at first said scornfully to her, "Amusez ce niais là; nous en avons besoin à présent." But it was soon found that Metternich made important political use of the lady's smiles. Every one knows how the great coachman had to lay down the reins, leave the box, and escape for his life; but as every one may not know a few particulars of this flight, which Count Mailath tells us, we will close with them our fragmentary sketches of Austrian rulers and Austrian manners. After escaping from Vienna in a fiacre, and remaining in concealment at a friend's house for three days, Metternich and his wife were at length safely deposited in a private carriage, supposed to be empty, on the railway at Olmütz. After remaining for seventeen hours shut up in this carriage, the Prince exclaimed, "Whether I die of thirst, or any other way, is all one; I must have something to drink." At a station he called for a glass of water, and thus the rest of the passengers became aware that the carriage was not empty. Immediately it was whispered about, "They are suspicious persons." At this critical moment, the friend who had charge of Metternich's carriage, let the conductor into the secret, and the signal for starting was given; several passengers who had got down were left behind, but the Prince was saved. Once more he was in danger. At an inn it was noticed that the pretended English always spoke French, and the fineness of their linen was remarked. The suggestion, "It may be Prince Metternich," was met with the energetic answer, "If I knew that, I would kill him with my own hand." This admonition that it would be well to push on was not neglected, and thenceforward their journey was pursued without any further threatening adventures to Holland, and finally to England.

## ART. II.—DRYDEN AND HIS TIMES.

1. *The Poetical Works of John Dryden.* Edited by Robert Bell. 3 vols. London: J. W. Parker and Son. 1854.
2. *Selections from the Poetry of Dryden, including his Plays and Translations.* London: J. W. Parker and Son. 1852.

WHEN Pope, comparing the enduring honours of a few Greek and Roman writers with the precarious tenure of modern literary fame, predicted that—

“Such as Chaucer is will Dryden be,”

he uttered a prophecy which has been nearly fulfilled. In virtue of his “Alexander’s Feast,” his “Character of a Good Parson,” his “Mac-Flecknoe,” a few sketches in his “Absalom and Achitophel,” and a few pregnant couplets which have passed into proverbs, Dryden may be said to have a name to live. But by far the larger portion of his works, both poetical and critical—writings which at the time and long afterwards were studied equally by scholars and men of the world, and regarded as among the fairest monuments of our literature—is now forgotten. How many educated men in our day have read the “Hind and the Panther”? What manager of a theatre would be reckless enough to revive “Don Sebastian,” or “All for Love”? Our “Poetical Selections” no longer include the “Annus Mirabilis,” or the “Stanzas to the Lord Protector:” and the critical prefaces of Dryden are as seldom cited as the writings of Alexander Ross. The tide of fashion has nearly ebbed away from the literature of the Restoration. Dryden and Cowley, and Dorset and Buckhurst, are scarcely better known than the Dionysiaca of Nonnus, or the Post-homerica of Quintus Calaber. They have paid the penalty of embodying the tastes of a few brief generations, instead of reflecting the permanent forms of beauty and truth, and are obscured by the age which at one time they partially eclipsed. Time has confirmed the titles of our elder quaternion of bards—Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton—to their thrones, and has inscribed younger names in the golden book of our literature. But it has dimmed even the fine gold of Dryden, because of its accompanying alloy, and has expunged from its register many feebler inscriptions, which were at one period believed to be indelibly graven therein.

Yet, whatever may be the inferiority of the literature of the Restoration, as compared with that of the Elizabethan age, it has sterling merits of its own which should rescue it from “mere oblivion.” It has at once an historical and a literary value. It represents our forefathers as faithfully as the portraits of Lely

and Kneller. It embodies new forms and qualities of our language. It is full of instruction as the costume of the current imagination and philosophy of half-a-century. It is a link in the continuity of ages necessary to the completeness of the chain which unites Chaucer with Wordsworth and Tennyson. If wanting in the higher qualities of earnest thought and passion, if infinitely less profound in its essence, and infinitely less harmonious in its forms than our elder literature, it is yet pregnant with good sense and keen observation, and clad in an idiomatic purity of diction which we ourselves shall do well to emulate. Compared with its predecessor, indeed, it is a St. Martin's summer. Its brightness is not that of a July noon; its mornings and evenings do not succeed or usher in a warm and star-lit twilight. Its foliage is imbrowned by the approach of winter; the fresh and lusty vigour of the spring has passed away.

Yet conceding so much, and admitting also that the present century has widened the domain, and in some degree renewed the summer noon of poetry—that Byron, Scott, Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, and Tennyson, have explored regions of imagination unknown to Dryden and Pope—there yet remains for the age which opens with the Restoration the intrinsic and imperishable praise of having clothed masculine good sense in strong idiomatic and often harmonious diction. They excelled as much in the rhetoric of verse as their predecessors had excelled in dramatic poetry, or their successors in lyrical and descriptive. Literature, like the history of man, is made up of continuous generations; each possessing, where it is really alive, its separate characteristics, each performing its appointed work. We should reluctantly behold any one of these links dropping from the chain. We would no more forego the literature of Queen Anne's reign, than we would have stricken from the register of our kings the comparatively feeble periods of the third of our Henries, or the first and second of our Georges. If we can no longer walk in their ways, or sympathize cordially in their feelings, we would at least occasionally revert to them as exponents of a past which had its significance, and bore fruit in its season. We may learn much from the verse of Dryden, and from the prose of Bolingbroke; we may employ their works profitably as an antidote to the exotic vulgarisms that infect our diction, and the sickly sentimentalities which of late years we have been importing from our continental neighbours. It were a wholesome regimen for more than one popular historian of our time, and for at least a score of our poets and prosemen, to be prescribed a course of study of the English writers who flourished between the Restoration and the accession of George I. Perhaps a Pythagorean silence of seven years might effect a more radical cure: never-

theless, we should gratefully accept the less powerful remedy, and merely insist on a sufficient trial of the prescription.

Deeming that there is so much wholesome stuff in works now almost universally neglected, we hail with sincere pleasure any attempt to bring them again to notice. We await with no common expectation Mr. Croker's long promised edition of Pope; and we are glad to receive Dryden in a form which, for its convenience and its moderate price, may put him into the hands of many whom a more complete array of his works would necessarily deter from purchasing them. We incline to think that merely cheap literature has done its worst. The public begins to weary even of classical writers inaccurately printed and ignorantly edited. It has found out that although it is desirable to have Gibbon and Cowper cheap, yet that bad texts and worse typography are dear at any price. The Annotated Edition of the British Poets lies under none of these objections. The editor is a well-read scholar, who performs his work conscientiously, and with a due sense of its importance. He has bestowed great pains in the revision of the text, and in his critical or historical elucidations; and his biographical prefaces are not mere crude compilations from previously existing sources, but often contain new and original materials, and always afford evidence in themselves that where Mr. R. Bell has employed the labours of his predecessors, he has also winnowed and sifted them diligently. Nor is it an ordinary merit in this series, that it is by no means restricted to the best known and most popular of our elder writers; on the contrary, room has been found for writers like Oldham, who have hitherto occupied a very subordinate place, or been entirely omitted from such collections. The publication, however, of the best works of John Dryden is in itself a sufficient cause for thinking highly both of the editor's good sense, and of the proprietors' enterprising spirit. We avail ourselves of the opportunity afforded by this well-executed edition of his best poetical works, to cast a brief glance at the literature of which he was, if not exactly the creator, yet certainly the foremost writer, and to attempt, so far as our limits will permit, to gauge and define the qualities of an era of poetry, which a few years ago was unduly depreciated by critics generally, and by none more than by those who had gained for themselves a high reputation as poets or judges of poetry. We are of opinion that they laid their venue wrong; and that when Mr. Wordsworth affirmed that Dryden's descriptions of external nature were merely book descriptions, he mistook altogether the age and the writer.

In reviewing the literary character of an age, it is seldom we can meet with a more complete representative of its merits and

defects, than Dryden was of the literature of the Restoration. He was formed by the times in which he wrote; but formed on so ample a scale, that he collected in himself its various attributes, reflected them in their fairest colours and proportions, and, in some measure also, stood superior to them. It is wrong to regard Dryden as the immediate successor of the great writers who adorned the reigns of Elizabeth and the first two Stuart kings. It would be as correct to say, that the Maiden Queen succeeded immediately to the Plantagenets; or that the age of Spenser and Shakspeare directly joined that of Gower and Chaucer. Next to the great age of English poetry, indeed, Dryden appears as the greatest name—but it is *proximus intervallo*. The great age had declined: there was a marked and a long interregnum, and during that intercalary period had grown up much that was vicious in taste, rude in form, and affected in scope and manner. Dryden did not succeed to Jonson, Shirley, and Fletcher, so much as to Donne, Withers, and Cowley. He was not the Augustulus of a decaying empire, so much as the founder of a new dynasty. Compared with the old empire, he would rank as a secondary prince: contrasted with the new one, he stands a legitimate and powerful monarch.

Dryden, if he is to be estimated fully and fairly, must be considered under the different aspects of a poet, a critic, and a scholar. As a poet, his career may be divided into three epochs: 1. When he was a writer of occasional verses, such as his panegyric upon the Lord Protector, and his *Annus Mirabilis*. 2. His contributions to the English drama. 3. When he gathered up all his powers, and was at once the most admirable of narrators in verse, and the most powerful and pungent of modern satirists. And these phases of his literary career correspond remarkably with the phases of his private life. In the first of them he was striving for subsistence and reputation; he flattered the great, and solicited patrons. In the second, although the struggle for fame and bread in some measure continued, yet the poet was in an altogether firmer and more promising position. He had allied himself with the theatre, which, recovering from the dead palsy of Puritanism, had once more become the most popular and remunerating province of literature. In the third of these epochs, he had won for himself the observation of all ranks of society. He was valuable to the Court, since his powers of ratiocination in verse enabled him to do it singular service as a pamphleteer; he was caressed by the noble and the wealthy, for his panegyrics were recorded as patents for posterity, and his satire was feared like a brand in the pillory; and he was acknowledged by the whole order of wits—versemen and prosemen—as their Coryphæus, since he was without a rival in

all the forms of literature at that time acceptable to the public. Reverence and alarm combined to invest him for many years with all the attributes of a literary despot. Before his lash the booksellers humbled themselves, and Grub-street licked the dust; nor was it until glorious John had committed an irreparable mistake in his religion and politics, and identified himself with the falling house of Stuart, that he was fairly deposed, and rendered vulnerable by the shafts of Shadwell, Settle, Milbourne, and Embden; and even then, deprived of his laureate-wreath, unpopular at Court, and obnoxious to the Protestant party, the veteran retained sufficient vigour to rise again a new Antæus from the earth, and to bind around his brows the least perishable leaves of his poetic crown.

The family of the Drydens, so far as it can be traced, came originally from Cumberland, where in the sixteenth century they were in possession of the estate of Staffhill. The orthography of their name varies considerably. Anthony Wood, who was intimate with some members of the family, and Aubrey in his "Lives," both spell it Dreyden. It was occasionally written Dreyden, but the usual form was Driden, until the most illustrious owner of the name set the example of writing it Dryden. The Dridens of Cumberland disappear in the first half of the sixteenth century. Thenceforward the principal branch of the family established itself at Canons-Ashby, in Northamptonshire, where Sir Erasmus Driden filled the office of High Sheriff of the county under Queen Elizabeth, and was created a baronet by her successor in 1619. The third son of Sir Erasmus was the poet's father, Erasmus Driden, Esq., the owner of a small estate in the village of Blakesley, about three miles from the paternal seat at Canons-Ashby. This gentleman married Mary, the daughter of the Rev. Henry Pickering, a Puritan minister, and youngest son of Sir Gilbert Pickering. This was the second intermarriage between these families, and their connexion appeared at an early period of the poet's career to afford him the best chance of attaining a good social position. For Sir Gilbert Pickering enjoyed the favour of Cromwell, was a member of the Protector's House of Lords; and, independently of his private income, held several lucrative employments. But the fortunes of Sir Gilbert's grandson were otherwise ordained.

John Dryden was the eldest of fourteen children—an amount of population which must have been a serious incumbrance upon the *paterna rura* at Blakesley. That they proved so, appears from the fact that although the Drydens *a parte ante* were landed proprietors on a greater or smaller scale, the Drydens *a parte post*, that is, the fruits of the marriage of Erasmus and Mary, were some of them either grocers or tobacconists, or espoused

respectable dealers in refined sugar and choice havannas. That they entered into business was greatly to their credit, more especially as there is reason to think that they followed it with diligence. But assuredly in those days when coats of arms were assigned to gentlemen alone, it was a descent in the social scale to offer their wares under the signs of the Coffee-shrub and the Wild Indian.

Dryden was born on the 9th of August, 1631, in the parsonage-house of Oldwincle All-Saints, in the county of Northampton. The house is still standing, and contains a small room still traditionally known as Dryden's room. As Henry Pickering became in due time rector of Oldwincle, he may possibly have been its curate, at the time of his daughter's accouchement; but we are not told whether it were chance or purpose which transferred from Blakesley hall to Oldwincle rectory the honour of hearing the poet's first cry. He received the rudiments of his education either at Tichmarsh, where an inscription in the school-house claims him for its "alumnus," or at the neighbouring school of Oundle. With both places, and with his Northamptonshire kindred generally—in spite of some "flyting anent Whig and Tory," as Lady Margaret Bellenden phrases it—Dryden kept up relations through life. From one of his letters, indeed, we learn that he booked his place in the Oundle coach a week in advance; that it took two days to travel from London thither; and that his friends Southerne and Congreve were to meet him on the road. This journey was in 1695, and consequently Dryden was in the habit of visiting his Northamptonshire kindred almost to the time of his decease.

But neither Tichmarsh nor Oundle afforded instruction enough for a lad of promising abilities; and that Dryden must have early acquired a respectable acquaintance with both Greek and Latin, is implied in the circumstance that he translated much and well from them, and that his mature years were too much occupied to allow him leisure for consulting Lilly's grammar or Scapula's lexicon. He was admitted a king's scholar at Westminster school under Dr. Busby, whose rigorous discipline made either scholars or blockheads. Busby did not make Dryden a blockhead, but though he doubtless scourged him soundly—for he was an impartial flagellant—inspired his pupil with a warm and lasting regard.

Busby either elicited or discovered the poetic vein of his pupil. One of his exercises at Westminster—a translation of the third Satire of Persius—was meritorious enough to be put on record: and at this school he composed his Elegy on the Death of Lord Hastings, and some commendatory verses on the Divine Epigrams of his friend John Hoddesdon, both

of which are included in his works. Their quaint and affected manner shows that the Westminster scholar had taken Donne and Cowley for his models of English verse.

Of Dryden's college career, nothing is known beyond what may be learned from the University register. He went up as a Westminster scholar to Trinity College, Cambridge, in May, 1650: took the degree of B.A. in January, 1653-4; and was created M.A. in 1657. Shadwell accuses Dryden of indulging "a scurrilous vein," and of having been obliged to fly from college for "traducing a nobleman;" but as Dryden remained three years in Cambridge after taking his Bachelor's degree, this story must be regarded as a proof of Shadwell's rather than of Dryden's scurrility. That the latter was not indeed always observant of college rules, appears from his being put out of Commons for a fortnight, "for disobedience to the vice-master, and for contumacy in taking his punishment." But as the saints in 1652 inherited the earth, or at least predominated in the Universities, we need not impute to the poet any very extraordinary backsliding. The Puritan fare can hardly have been very palatable to a high-spirited undergraduate. Whether for this cause, or for any subsequent distaste, Cambridge and Dryden seem to have fulfilled towards each other Dogberry's wish, that a merry meeting might be prohibited. He did not become a fellow of his college, and he avowed many years afterwards his preference for the rival "alma-mater"—

"Oxford to him a dearer name shall be  
Than his own mother-University.  
Thebes did his green unknowing youth engage,  
He chooses Athens in his riper age."

In 1654, Dryden, on the decease of his father, came into possession of his share of the Blakesley estate. Its whole annual value was sixty pounds; and by his right of primogeniture, two-thirds of this narrow rental devolved upon him immediately, with the remainder in reversion at his mother's death. "How much money have you, Master Mathew? Marry, some forty pounds a-year for all charges, and the usual drawbacks on landed property to meet meanwhile." Forty pounds, though nearly equivalent to thrice the sum in our days, was but a poor pittance for a gentleman born; and Dryden seems to have discerned that his head must help his body and its members, and that learning was an excellent thing when house and land were so unproductive. Accordingly, he returned to Cambridge for three years, and apparently lived wisdom with each of them. He who had "read Polybius in English for pleasure" as a boy, was likely to cultivate diligently both Greek and Roman lore *inter academias silvas*. And perhaps Dryden had fewer disturbing causes than

most men in prosecuting his studies. He was neither very social in his tastes, nor fluent in conversation. The grave society of the Cambridge Puritans, who looked upon the *literæ humaniores* as so much carnal knowledge, must have been distasteful to him: and as he neither then nor afterwards was addicted to bowls or cards or the bottle, it seems reasonable to conclude that his time, like that of his illustrious contemporary, Milton, was spent more with the dead than the living.

In 1657, the year in which Dryden quitted Cambridge, he completed his 26th birthday; and as he had shown himself not averse from marriage, he perhaps began to think it high time to improve his income. His prospects of advancement were fair, but, as it proved, delusive. His cousin, Sir Gilbert Pickering, stood high in Cromwell's favour. He had sat on the judgment-seat with Bradshaw, when a king was in the dock; he had been one of the Parliamentary councillors of state, a member of Cromwell's house of peers, a member also of his privy council. He was now lord chamberlain at the Protector's court. In Sir John Dryden, again, elder brother of the poet's father, a second patron was probably ready to take him by the hand. Both Pickering and Sir John were indeed noted as Pharisees *of* the Pharisees, yet neither of them was perhaps indisposed to promote the interests of his youthful relative. Dryden indeed seems to have acted as private secretary to Pickering, and thus barbed one of Shadwell's arrows with the taunt—

“The next step of advancement you began  
Was being clerk to Noll's Lord Chamberlain—”

But Dryden was destined to be the architect of his own fortunes. The great Protector died: Richard Cromwell was a broken reed: the Pickering interest was at ebb-tide, and in 1660 Charles II. was restored to the throne of his ancestors.

The first memorable verses composed by Dryden were his “Panegyric on the late Lord Protector.” He was nearly thirty years of age when he published them, and although not exempt from conceits, they exhibit a diminished admiration for Cowley, and a decided improvement in the art of versification. Davenant had now become his model, and although Davenant's Gondibert “in heroic stanzas” has long since ceased to be read, it was a pattern not merely better suited to Dryden's genius, but also much more consonant with good sense and good versification than Cowley's Pindarics, or Donne's incorrigible Elegies. The stanzas to Cromwell's memory were published at a most unfortunate period. Their grave and sincere tone would doubtless be acceptable to the independent party. But there was little leisure to read or mark them. The major-generals were at

variance with each other, the civilians were weary of a military government: the Royalists were plotting as busily as ever: the head of the State was weak: the heart of the nation was faint: the intentions of Monk and his soldiers were dubious; the people were weary of change, and Charles was within a few hours' sail from Dover. The revolution had ebbed away, and royalty came back on a spring-tide of zeal and enthusiasm. Dryden had made a bad beginning for one who desired his verses to be made bread for himself: but although his compliments to the dead were ungracious to the living, it is greatly to his honour that he never recanted his eulogy of Cromwell, even when his enemies threw it in the teeth of the author of "*Absalom and Achitophel*."

Dryden's change of opinion, or at least of its vehicle, language, was probably unattended with much regret or self-sacrifice. He was connected with the Puritans more by natural ties and early associations than by any deep feeling or deliberate convictions of his own. He had been born too late to remember vividly the abuses of the first Charles's reign; but he was old enough to remember the iron restraints and the ceremonial prudery of the Puritan regimen. He had witnessed Cromwell's abortive efforts to restore England to any secure or stable form of government: and when the mighty master's hand had dropped the reins, he had beheld disorder and discord yoked to the state-chariot. Even the Puritan party desired the king's return. He was at least one man in place of five or six military despots, and having so long eaten the bitter bread of banishment, he might be presumed to have profited by the discipline of adversity. The hopes entertained were not unreasonable: apart indeed in his cottage at Chalfont sat one man who discerned the inherent taint of the Stuart blood, and despaired of its being healed by any waters. But the wisdom of Milton was shared by few, and the desire of the nation was toward their king. It is no disgrace to Dryden that he participated in feelings all but universal, and little discredit to him that he, a needy man, hastened to obliterate the memory of his heroic stanzas by the production of his "*Astræa Redux*." The publication of this "copy of verses," however, cost him for ever the support of the Pickerings. It had never been worth much to him, for he was now thirty years of age, unplaced and unsalaried. And now began what proved to be the proper business of his life. He sought a patron in a publisher: and began to coin his brain for ducats. He removed from the Lord Chamberlain's rooms of state to an obscure lodging in the house of Herringman, a bookseller in the New Exchange, and commenced author by profession, although he seems never to have stood on the lowest step of the ladder, or, as his enemies so often reproached him, to have become a mere bookseller's

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hack. On the contrary, even while under Herringman's roof, we have intimations of his forming and retaining more than one titled acquaintance, as well as of his intimacy with Sir Robert Howard, son of the first Earl of Berkshire, a gentleman who dallied with the Muses, and was just then bringing out a collection of poems. Dryden prefixed some complimentary lines to the volume. He had probably rendered Sir Robert similar service to that which Pope afforded to Wycherley—he mended and clear-starched Sir Robert's lines. Dryden's intimacy with Sir Robert began with literary copartnership, and was cemented, although not without some intervening coolness, by marriage with his sister, the Lady Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the Earl of Berkshire. The lampooners of the age allege that this lady's character was not immaculate. But for these charges there is no evidence. An alliance with a man who depended upon his writings for his bread: who had not yet particularly distinguished himself: who had "bitter Puritans" for his kinsfolk, and, what was perhaps worse in the eyes of his wife's family, relations in trade—may not have been very acceptable to the Earl of Berkshire. But if the pedigree of the Howards sustained some blemish by it, Dryden was the greatest sufferer in the end by the match. The intellect of Lady Elizabeth was weak; her temper was violent, and she appears neither to have been proud of her husband's literary distinctions, nor, although nearly portionless herself, to have submitted with a good grace to the privations of a narrow and precarious income. As Dante complained of his "*fiera moglia*," so Dryden rarely misses an opportunity for a sarcasm against matrimony. Mr. Bell's researches have solved a question which eluded the industry of Malone. From the evidence of the register, it appears that Dryden was married on the first of December, 1663, at the parish church of St. Swithin's, in London.

With his connexion with Sir Robert Howard began Dryden's career as a dramatic poet. But as we have distinguished this as the second phase of his literary life, we shall, before entering upon it, sum up what he wrote and published, while he still may be considered as the connecting link between the writers who preceded and the writers who followed the Restoration. The poems of this first period were all occasional—prompted by the events of the day, and were either elegies or panegyrics—once indeed he opened his natural vein of satire at the expense of the Dutch, but with far inferior effect to Marvel, or even to some who were both Marvel's inferiors and his own. Dryden began to write late, and was long in discovering the natural bent and limit of his powers. Of his verses, whether in the ten syllable heroic measure, or in the quatrain stanza, few are remembered now, and

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few indeed deserve to be memorable. To modern ears his panegyric seems servile, his elegy too quaint and curious for truth. Yet it would be unfair to try Dryden or his contemporaries by our own measures of fitness or standard of opinion. We have ceased to flatter kings; we no longer mourn in verse for the decease of lords or ladies: we grant no privilege of apotheosis; we do not discern in the misfortunes or the felicity of the great either a malign or a favourable aspect of the stars. Our homage has been turned to the people, and in some measure to ourselves. We glory in the nineteenth century, and we glorify ourselves for being born in it. But when Dryden wrote, divinity was still conceived to hedge a king—and the conception was strengthened in the minds of all, except a few surly independents, by the horror awakened by the king's execution, by the special-pleading of the pulpit and *Eikôn Basilike*, by the restoration of peace at home, by weariness of the Puritanic yoke, and by the almost unanimous voice of the press and the theatre. Marvel and Milton stood alone. But the herd of court-poets and court-preachers had other objects in view than poverty and freedom; and if Dryden took his station among the adulators of power, he was at least not singular in his choice, and extravagant as his eulogies appear to us, they were much less fulsome than those of his literary contemporaries in general. We may turn with aversion from his praises of the "best of kings" and Lady Castlemaine; but we should not forget that he had discerned and celebrated the royal nature of Cromwell in verses which posterity will never wholly let die. It is curious to remark the close resemblance between Cowley's and Dryden's characters of the Great Protector; for though Cowley purposed to defame, he was enforced to extol, and though he puts his praise in the devil's mouth, yet his rejoinder is no answer to the discerning fiend. The panegyric of the *Astræa Redux*, though written after Dryden had strengthened his "'prentice hand," is as inferior to the lines on the Death of the Protector as Charles himself was inferior to Cromwell.

We shall not expend many words upon Dryden's plays. A few of them attained an immediate popularity, a few were coldly approved, and others promptly condemned. Posterity, however, has included them all under one verdict, and they are never represented and seldom read. A few passages of vigorous versification are indeed retained in specimens of the English poets; but these owe their preservation less to their dramatic merits than to the power of reasoning in verse in which lay Dryden's strength. "*Hic currus et arma*"—his talents were those of the pleader and the satirist; he sketched characters in verse as faithfully and vividly as Clarendon drew them in prose; he argued in

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poetry as closely and effectively as Serjeant Maynard argued in the Court of Common Pleas. But he had not the gift either of constructing a dramatic plot, or of bringing his characters into relations with one another, or of diversifying the dialogue, or moving to mirth or tears. His poverty of dramatic invention indeed was not inaptly pointed out by Matthew Clifford:—"I am strangely mistaken," he writes in his "Notes on the Hind and Panther," "if I have not seen this very Almanzor of yours in some disguise about this town, and passing under another name. Prithee tell me true, was not this huff-cap once the Indian Emperor? and, at another time, did he not call himself Maximine? Was not Lyndaraxa once called Almeria—I mean under Montezuma the Indian Emperor? I protest and vow they are either the same, or so alike that I can't for my heart distinguish one from the other. You are, therefore, a strange unconscionable thief, that art not content to steal from others, but dost rob thy poor wretched self too." Dryden, it should be added, was conscious of his own dramatic deficiencies, and after the failure of his comedy of the "Assignment" candidly admits them. "I desire," he says, "to be no longer the Sisyphus of the stage; to roll up a stone with endless labour, which, to follow the proverb, *gathers no moss*, and which is perpetually falling down again. I never thought myself very fit for an employment where many of my predecessors have excelled me in all kinds; and some of my contemporaries, even in my own partial judgment, have outdone me in comedy." He probably alludes to Etherege and Shadwell, who, inferior to Dryden in every other respect, possessed the faculty denied to him of drawing from the life, and reproducing on the stage the vices and follies which they saw and practised in society.

When Dryden began to write for the stage, dramatic literature was afflicted by two opposite maladies. Its healthy circulation had been suddenly arrested by Puritanism, and when the ban imposed by the saints was at length removed, the national taste was as suddenly corrupted. The corruption arose partly from an incapacity for relishing the great dramas which had entertained the Maiden Queen and her court, and partly from a capacity for enjoying the bombast and licence of the French theatre, as it flourished under the patronage of Louis XIV. Over-strained pretensions to sanctity had struck a deathblow upon all genuine heroic sentiment in the nation. The elect had so often shown themselves false, ambitious, and self-seeking, that men had begun to distrust even the semblances of truth, public spirit, and self-sacrifice, and rejoiced in reducing to a common level the nobler passions which elevate at once both real and scenic life. When Sydney, and Essex, and Raleigh surrounded the throne of

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the sovereign, Spenser's visions of beauty and Shakspeare's women were intelligible creations; but at a court where Castlemaine presided, Ophelia, Desdemona, and Juliet were little more than feeble and ineffectual abstractions. England had lost in the Civil Wars "its elder breed of noble blood." The Roundhead had withdrawn sullenly from the contest, and either sought a new home on alien shores, or retired far from the hum of cities to his plough or his loom; the old Cavalier also was now seldom found in the purlicus of the court. He had greeted the Restoration as the fulfilment of his joys and the answer to his prayers; but to him it had brought only disappointment and dismay. The king had indeed returned, but there came not back with him the ancient chivalry of the land—the Falklands, the Nevilles, the Herberts, and the Veres, the men whom Vandyck painted, the men whom Clarendon has described in colours scarcely less vivid. In their room had returned a band of dissolute exiles, at once rapacious and profuse, whom adversity had neither disciplined nor purified, and whom prosperity and power rendered more reckless and corrupt. They had, many of them, passed the term of their banishment at Paris and Madrid, and there beheld the attractive spectacle of absolute monarchy pampered by the arts and especially adulated by the drama. The stately ceremonial of the Spanish court, no less than the elaborate decorum of the court of France, hardly concealed the moral laxity which prevailed at both. Each was the home of licentious intrigues; the monarchs lived in ostentatious adultery, and the courtier who had not at least one avowed mistress was regarded either as a block or a churl. The Spanish and French play-writers had long ceased to draw their characters from nature. The intrigues of comedy were those of the court, and tragedy borrowed its fable and its heroes from Seneca and Euripides, from the declining eras of the Roman and Attic drama. From these debased or pseudo-classic types the theatre of the Restoration took its models. In tragedy, passion was superseded by rhetoric; in comedy, the follies of the day were represented by the vices of the day. With the Restoration, indeed, love disappears and sensuousness takes its place. Nor was vice casually or capriciously employed as a means of public attraction. It was not so much the condiment which flavoured the solid meat as the meat itself. In the drama of the age of Elizabeth and the first two Stuarts, there is undoubtedly much indelicate writing. Ford meddled with interdicted and repulsive subjects; Fletcher and Massinger are frequently coarse; and there are phrases and allusions in Jonson and Shakspeare which we may desire that they had "discreetly blotted" out. But in none of the writers anterior to the Restoration do we find any systematic attempt to represent vice as laudable, and virtue as

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ridiculous. We do not find even in Shirley the breach of the marriage-vow held up as the whole duty of man and woman also; and Shirley's plays approach much nearer to those of Afra Behn, Etherege, and Shadwell in their coarse profligacy than those of either Fletcher or Ford in their worst extravagances. The masculine coarseness of the earlier period is indeed like a blemish on a fair face—a blot on the scutcheon—a flaw in crystal—the foot of clay to the golden image; but the flaw, the blot, the blemish, and the clay are separable from their purer and richer accompaniments; whereas the systematic profligacy of the dramatic literature which followed the return of Charles II. percolates the entire system, and clings to its members as the leprosy of the East to the luckless outcasts from the dwellings of men.

We acquit Dryden of acting upon any formal scheme for demoralizing his age: he merely followed a corrupt fashion, and owned his popularity, as a writer for the stage, to his subserviency. He would probably have alleged in his defence—and he might fairly do so—the old excuse of Ovid:

“Crede mihi, mores distant a carmine nostri;  
Vita verecunda est, musa jocosa, mihi.”

And it must be admitted also that his worst plays are much less offensive than many which, at the moment of their production, were preferred to his. Moreover, we must do him the justice to add, that he kissed the rod with most becoming meekness, when in 1698, Jeremy Collier published his “Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage.” On no one's shoulders did the flail of the merciless Non-juror descend with more weight than upon Dryden's. From no one—for he had approved himself cunning in controversial fence—was a prompter or more acrimonious reply looked for by the world. It was expected, and doubtless much desired that Dares should beat Entellus black and blue. But the world was disappointed. Dryden, who on much smaller provocations had exhibited violent resentment, who both in prose and verse wielded a weapon of the keenest edge, on this occasion stood silent and abashed. Indeed, as we have seen, he did not estimate highly his dramatic productions: he was perhaps content with the fame and money which they brought him, and did not care to ruffle himself in the defence of what he lightly valued. But it is more charitable to him, and indeed more consistent with all we know of his sober and laborious life, to infer that he felt Collier to be in the right, and that although he himself had contributed to the vices of the age, he held it “stuff of the conscience” not to interpose between them and their castigation. At a later period, he mentioned the “Short View,” in the preface to his Fables. He complained of

the asperity with which he had been treated. He alleged certain pleas in exculpation of his errors, but, in the main, he acknowledges the justice of the reproof. "If Mr. Collier," he said, "be my enemy, let him triumph. If he be my friend, as I have given him no personal occasion to be otherwise, he will be glad of my repentance."

Dryden's career as a writer for the stage may be divided into four periods. 1. From its commencement with the comedy of the "Wild Gallant," in February, 1662-3, to the suspension of dramatic entertainments in 1666, the year in which Old London City was laid in ashes. 2. From the re-opening of the Playhouses to the time when the King's Theatre was burnt down, in 1671-2. 3. During the next ten years, Dryden, who had become an active pamphleteer in verse, and a critic almost without appeal in prose, discontinued writing for the stage; but (4) when the Revolution deprived him of court-favour, and of his offices of laureate and historiographer royal, and he was again almost as needy as when he lived under the roof of Herringman, he once more resorted to the drama for a livelihood, and, though declining in years and in health, produced five plays, and among them, one of the most genial and vigorous of his productions, "Don Sebastian."

That Dryden looked to his dramatic compositions as a sure and prompt source of income appears from the compact into which he entered, after the success of his earlier plays, with the managers of the King's Theatre. He agreed to furnish the patentee, Killigrew, with three dramas annually, in consideration of a share and quarter in the theatre. Had he kept to his obligation, this arrangement would have produced him yearly between three and four hundred pounds. But he overrated his powers, and, although he wrote rapidly, he was unable to fulfil his contract to the letter. His industry however was great. In 1667, he published his "Annus Mirabilis," and during the next two or three years, he produced no less than six plays; and if other dramatic writers have exceeded him in fertility of invention and rapidity of execution, yet it should be remembered that Dryden, in thus purveying for the stage, was rather forcing than complying with his natural bent.

He began as a pupil of Corneille and the rhymed drama of the French school. He did not indeed introduce this fashion, which Hayley absurdly revived in the last century, but he defended it, in his "Essay on Dramatic Poetry," with a vigour and felicity of style as remarkable at least as his theory was erroneous. Sir Robert as a dramatic poet was inferior to Dryden, but as a critic his views were on this point more correct, and although Dryden had the public on his side, both the public and himself

were in the wrong. Sir Robert had at first modestly combated his brother-in-law's dogmas, but replied to his "Essay" with more pith and point. In his defence of the Essay, Dryden handled Sir Robert somewhat roughly, and the brothers-in-law were for a time estranged from each other.

Dryden, indeed, was at this period of his literary career like a man feeling about in the dark, and trying to discover, amid a variety of roads, the one which alone leads to his home. He was master of the art of reasoning in verse, and his instincts told him that here lay his proper strength. He was also no mean proficient in *carte and tierce* dialogue, and, like Euripides, introduced on the stage a mode of conversation that would have suited a tart debate in the forum or the schools, but which was as ill adapted to the theatre as Sir Roger l'Estrange's style would have been to the pulpit. That our readers may not accuse us of underrating Dryden's dramatic style in his first manner, we cite the following scene from the "Conquest of Granada." The solicitations of the lover and the denials of the Queen are expressed as antithetically as in the very worst scene of the very worst extant Greek tragedy—the "Electra" of Euripides:—

*Almahide.* My light will sure discover those who talk.—  
Who dares to interrupt my private walk?

*Almanzor.* He who dares love, and for that love must die,  
And knowing this, dares yet love on, am I.

*Almahide.* That love which you can hope, and I can pay,  
May be received and given in open day :  
My praise and my esteem you had before :  
And you have bound yourself to ask no more.

*Almanzor.* Yes, I have bound myself : but will you take  
The forfeit of that bond, which force did make ?

*Almahide.* You know you are from recompence debarred :  
But purest love can live without reward.

*Almanzor.* Pure love had need to be itself a feast :  
For, like pure elements, 'twill nourish least.

*Almahide.* It therefore yields the only pure content :  
For it, like angels, needs no nourishment."

And in this fashion—"the right fencing grace : tap for tap, and so part fair"—this skilful pair of Moorish lovers argue their case through some score of similar rejoinders.

Dryden would not yield to the arguments of Sir Robert Howard in behalf of good sense and dramatic consistency : but he was convinced by his own maturer judgment, and by the study of Shakespeare, and abandoned his error as cordially as he once maintained it. In the prologue to the tragedy of "Aurungzebe," produced in 1675, he announced his abandonment of the old form, and he followed up his recantation practically in 1678, by

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the play of "All for Love," expressly modelled on the example of Shakespeare. This, as he tells us, was the only play he ever wrote for himself; "the rest were given to the people." In the ensuing year he altered "Troilus and Cressida," and wrote, jointly with Lee, the tragedy of "Œdipus." To his version of "Troilus and Cressida," he prefixed an Essay on the Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy, in which he modified or abjured many of his earlier opinions upon dramatic composition. It was a singular trait in his character that he made the public his confessor. Whatever subject he chose, in whatever manner he treated it, he laboured to persuade his readers that the subject was the most eligible and his treatment of it the most judicious possible. The very confidence with which he asserts his merits is perhaps an indirect proof that he mistrusted himself, and sought to confirm by the suffrages of his readers the opinions which secretly he doubted. But whatever were his motives for them, the public were gainers by his confessions. Periodical criticism was as yet uninvented. A few works, indeed, upon the laws of writing had been published subsequently to the crude discourses of Puttenham and Webbe. But although Sir Philip Sydney's "Defence of Poesy" will always be read with pleasure, and Campion and Sir John Harrington may still be consulted with profit, Dryden must be allowed the praise of being the first English critic who applied general laws to particular cases in literature, and who initiated the public in the art of discriminating in matters of taste. His own prose style has always been accounted a model by the best judges. Charles Fox, in the composition of his history, regarded Dryden as an authority for the use of words from which there was no appeal. He has greater facility than Cowley; more masculine vigour than Addison: and he combines with singular facility the twin elements of our language—its Roman amplitude with its Saxon raciness. If his critical works contain many assertions from which we are compelled to dissent, if they enunciate no new principles, or sometimes seem to abound with commonplace remarks, we must remember that at the time they were written his canons of taste were novel, his mistakes were inseparable from a first inquiry, and his commonplaces discoveries to those who read them originally. Had Dryden lived in the present century, he would probably have rivalled Southey or Mr. Macaulay in the number and excellence of his periodical essays. He would have produced few plays, if he had been able to employ his various knowledge and his masculine diction in the composition of "articles," and instead of a contract with the King's or Duke's Theatre, he would probably once a quarter have received a cheque from Messrs. Murray or Longmans. Instead of Edinburgh or Quarterly Reviews, he wrote

essays and prefaces: and to these we can still recur with pleasure, or at least with interest.

Dryden, however, was to learn from rougher critics than Howard, and by a less pleasant discipline than enlarged study and reflection, the faults of his theory respecting the employment of rhyme in dramatic compositions. His popularity as an author bred envy in many quarters: his plainness of speech did not mitigate it. Although not unacceptable to the leaders of politics and literature, he seems never to have secured for himself any very powerful patron. He was no suitor for favours: he did not, until a comparatively late period of his career, identify himself with any of the parties of the time. He had indeed complimented Charles and Lady Castlemaine and Chancellor Hyde, but he did not besiege their doors; and neither his pursuits nor his tastes permitted him to become the boon companion of the Sedleys, Buckinghams, and Rochesters. But although he was no partisan, it was remembered that he had once been a Puritan, and although he kept clear of popular controversies in general, he had shown quite satirical power enough to create enemies. As yet was undiscovered the art of rendering an adversary ridiculous, whether by "showing him up" in a review, or by caricaturing his form or features in a weekly newspaper. *H. B.* and "*Punch*" as yet slept among the possibilities of the future. Their mirthful and salutary influence was ill supplied by the coarse banter of the theatre: and to the theatre was allotted the task of making Dryden and heroic plays at once the butt of satire. In the winter of 1671, the Duke of Buckingham produced his famous "*Rehearsal*"—a burlesque which had wit enough in it to survive its original object; since Cibber turned it against Pope, and Garrick continued to perform its principal character long after both Dryden and his successor in satire were beyond reach of its shafts. Buckingham is said to have been assisted by Butler, Spratt, Clifford, and others in feathering and pointing his quiver of arrows: indeed, it bears traces of having been the work of an academy of wits. Davenant, who has the credit of introducing heroic plays, was originally meant for the hero, but death delivered from this further trial one who had long been an abundant cause of wit in others. Dryden in 1670 had succeeded to Davenant's vacant laureateship, and was in many respects better suited for this kind of satire than his predecessor. His person was inclined to corpulence, whence he had acquired the nickname of *Squab*; his costume was singular; he wore, at least in his earlier days, "a suit of Norwich drugget;" and that at a time when courtiers and poets carried an estate on their heads and backs in the form of feathers, velvet, Mechlin lace, and Steinkirk wigs. He was notoriously a bad

reader, and recited his sounding couplets with a tedious and hesitating delivery, that frequently raised inextinguishable laughter in the frequenters of the Green Room. Buckingham, a first-rate mimic himself, sedulously trained the actor who performed *Bayes* in all the peculiarities of Dryden. The town was highly amused, but its taste was not corrected by the wit of "The Rehearsal." So long as Dryden continued to write them, heroic plays continued to be popular. He had now become the most conspicuous critic of his time. His canons of criticism gave the laws to coffee-houses and clubs: his plays attracted crowds to the theatres. And yet, high as he now stood in contemporary reputation, he would probably have left a name less enduring than that of Otway, and been confounded with the common herd of Crownes and Settles, had he not broke fresh ground in a different department of literature.

In the year 1681 appeared his great poem of "Absalom and Achitophel." Of his powers as a satirist, at least as a reasoner in verse, he had already given many proofs in his dramatic compositions. A large proportion of the most nervous and emphatic lines in his plays belongs to the class of gnomic verses, —ethical, social, or sarcastic maxims, such as belong equally to satire and the stage. But these were scattered over the wide surface of twenty-one dramas, and were too often buried beneath rant, buffoonery, and indecency. At length, in political satire a proper frame and canvas were provided for his talents; and—*versu incessu patuit deus*—Dryden, after doing taskwork for the theatre, and racking his invention for compliments to the unworthy, stood confessed the poetic chief of the Restoration era.

We are not informed whether reflection, advice, or accident guided Dryden into the right path at last. He had now arrived at the ripe age of fifty years, and was "long in debating upon and long in choosing" his proper vocation. He who on so many points of comparative insignificance took the public for his confessor, has unluckily been silent upon the motives which led him to quit the drama for controversial, satirical, and didactic verses. A clue to his change and better choice may perhaps be discovered in the circumstances of the times. In the first place, he had himself suffered much from the envy, insolence, and even violence of his contemporaries. He had been held up to ridicule by Buckingham: he had been the butt of epigram, satire, and invective from Crowne, Settle, Shadwell, and a mob of literary ruffians: he had been beaten in Rose-alley by Rochester's myrmidons: he had been twitted by the courtiers on account of his Puritan kindred: he had been reviled by the Puritans for his adherence to the court. He was not, as we have seen, of an impetuous temperament; but he had not the less a lively sense

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of injuries; and he probably saw that with one weapon alone he could efficiently requite them. The offences of the time were rank: the old antagonism of parties was reviving: plots and rumours of plots pervaded and dislocated all classes of society, and the leaders of parties were, with few exceptions, hypocrites in religion or profligates in conduct. The decorum which veiled the excesses of Versailles was disregarded in London: vice stalked abroad unbonneted and unmasked: and the enormities of Domitian's reign seemed to be repeated in that of Charles II.

It is scarcely possible that so shrewd an observer as Dryden proved himself to be, should not have brooded over this chaos, and laid up in his private meditations the plan and weapons of assault long before he opened the campaign. He had beheld, moreover, a sort of rehearsal of his new career performed by puny and clumsy debutants. Shadwell, Settle, and some other minor poets, let out their pens to the Whigs: Lee, Otway, and Tate, were in the pay of the Tories. The controversies of the age, which, after long political stagnation, at first threatened to revive old Puritan and Cavalier feuds, had suddenly concentrated themselves on two points—the Popish plot, and the succession of the Crown. The Tories and Catholics maintained the right of the lawful heir—James, Duke of York: the Whigs and Protestants, impelled by Shaftesbury, were fain to put up with a paltry shadow, who had no recommendations beyond his graceful address and handsome person. Under king Monmouth, Shaftesbury could not have missed being Mayor of the Palace; and he had the art to persuade the public, that in Monmouth alone were bound up the last hopes of their civil and religious liberties. There has probably never been a more worthless controversy than that which at this time divided the English nation. But its very worthlessness afforded the most abundant and appropriate materials for satire, and into this Dryden, in November 1681, plunged with the whole force and fervour of his genius—a knight paladin, suddenly taking part in the squabbles of village clowns.

Independent of the merits of its execution, of which we shall speak more at large, Dryden in this production has a just claim to the praise of originality. He quitted the beaten track of satire, which, since the time of Lucilius had lashed the vices and follies of classes and individuals, and he aimed his shafts at the great political questions, parties, and leaders of the day. He performed in verse the most difficult task of prose history—the delineation of the principal actors on the political stage, and performed it with such vigour and vivacity that his “characters” still remain the admitted types of Shaftesbury, Buckingham,

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Oates, Seymour, and Monmouth. Burnet, Roger North, Hume, and in our own days, Macaulay, owe no mean portion of their reputation to the skill with which they depict the men who have guided our counsels or our armies; but the most finished of their portraits are faint and defective when compared with the bold outline and vivid colours of Dryden. It must be owned, indeed, that his commendations are less successful than his censure, and that his character of Amiel—Sir Edward Seymour—is much less precisely cut and polished than those of Zimri, Zerah, or Achitophel. In the three latter, every stroke tells: every stroke is an addition to the likeness: every stroke is made at the right moment, and in the right place, and can no more be transposed or omitted than the lines and shadows of Holbein's or Titian's portraits. The age of Charles II., indeed, owes little less to Dryden's pen, than the age of Charles I. does to Vandyke's easel.

As Poet Laureate, Dryden's side in this controversy was marked out for him. It was the side also of his predilections, for in his plays he had maintained ultra-loyal opinions, and in his numerous essays and dedications had even paraded his Toryism. "*Absalom and Achitophel*" failed, indeed, in its immediate object, of turning the tide of opinion against Shaftesbury; but it undoubtedly produced a powerful effect on the public. It was read with avidity: it passed through five editions in one year: and it established Dryden's reputation as the most formidable of antagonists, and the most effective of pleaders in verse.

He did not loiter in the course which he had now so happily commenced: but his next efforts were, on the whole, less successful. Their inferiority was in some measure owing to the more restricted nature of their subjects. "*The Medal*:" a Satire against Sedition, appeared in March, 1682: it was prompted by the popular enthusiasm at Shaftesbury's acquittal. But even Shaftesbury, the most versatile and conspicuous man of the time, could not singly afford substance for a poem; and the *Medal* falls much below its predecessor in interest. It was followed by "*Mac Flecknoe*," in the same year; and although its hero, Shadwell, was even less calculated than Shaftesbury to bring out the full powers of Dryden's mind, scarcely one of his poems is nearer perfection. Of the four hundred lines in *Mac Flecknoe*, a few are coarse and ribaldrous, but none are feeble or careless: and in this satire, as in his former, the author opened a new vein, and afforded more than a hint to the *Dunciad*, the *Rosciad*, and the *Pursuits of Literature*.

The second part of "*Absalom and Achitophel*" appeared in November, 1682; and in a few days was followed by the

"*Religio Laici*." This year may accordingly be regarded as the *Annus Mirabilis* of Dryden's own life. His patent of perpetual remembrance was then signed and sealed. The continuation of "*Absalom and Achitophel*" was indeed, in the main, written by Nahum Tate; but Dryden had found an apt pupil in this translator of the Psalms; and not only revised his copy, but strengthened its occasional lines, and drew with his own hand the portraits of Settle and Shadwell.

In the same year, although he had now ceased to write for the stage, he brought out his "*Duke of Guise*," which must be reckoned among his political productions, since the parallel between the Leaguers of France and the Covenanters of England was obvious, and the evident purpose of this tragedy was to maintain the rights of the Duke of York.

Dryden now stood at the highest pinnacle of royal and courtly favour. He had rendered to his Sovereign and to the heir of the Crown such services as no other living author could have afforded: he had made himself pre-eminently obnoxious to the Protestant party, and had offended the Whigs past forgiveness. And yet, at the very moment when his name stood highest whether for praise or blame, the poet himself was suffering from pecuniary embarrassments. The promises of advancement which were made to him ended with the breath that uttered them: his salary as Laureate remained unpaid for four years; and when, after earnest and repeated solicitations, he obtained in May, 1684, an order on the Treasury for the payment of arrears, it was only for one quarter's salary due at Midsummer, 1680, and he received 50*l.* in lieu of 800*l.* Herringman the bookseller had been a better paymaster than Charles Stuart; who, while he withheld from Dryden his due, was squandering thousands of pounds upon his mistresses and favourites. There was, indeed, an ineradicable vein of shabbiness in all the Stuart monarchs of England. James defrauded Raleigh of his estate in Somersetshire, because, forsooth, the land was wanted for Carr. Ben Jonson's pension was grudgingly paid, and sometimes withheld altogether; and the distinguished servants of the court had reason to envy the men, on whom they looked down "as base mechanicals," for *they* at least received the wages of their service. No single writer of the time had done more to render the Puritans hateful and ridiculous than the author of *Hudibras*. Upon his unrivalled burlesque he had lavished stores of learning hardly inferior in amount to those expended upon their majestic poems by Dante and Milton. *Hudibras* was read by all men, quoted by all men, and raised inextinguishable laughter in all men; while the writer of it was often puzzled to procure for himself a roof, bread, and raiment. He received, after he had

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ceased to want anything, a monument and an epitaph; and the contrast between the misery of his life and the respect paid to his memory, was recorded in an epigram, of which the point is its literal truth:

"Whilst Butler, needy wretch, was yet alive,  
No generous patron would a dinner give:  
See him, when starved to death and turned to dust,  
Presented with a monumental bust.  
The poet's fate is here in emblem shown,  
He asked for bread and he received a stone."

Dryden, although not reduced to Butler's straits, was nearly in an equal degree with him the victim of royal neglect. It appears indeed from a document published for the first time by Mr. Bell, that in 1684 an additional pension of 100*l.* a year was bestowed upon him. We doubt whether either the addition or the arrears of the former salary were ever paid him. In his "*Threnodia Augustalis*," a Pindaric ode which he composed as Laureate, upon the death of his most sacred majesty Charles II., he intimates, that poets, "like birds of Paradise, fed on morning dew," from lack of more substantial nutriment. James II. indeed, after a while, opened his purse to the bard who had maintained his right to the throne at a season when "no man cried, God bless him," and when he was the most unpopular man in the three kingdoms. But this liberality did not come with the king's accession: on the contrary, Dryden's fortunes seemed to be rather impaired than improved by that event. He retained his Laureateship, indeed, and the original salary; and to have deprived Dryden of them would have been an act of ingratitude in James beyond even the ingratitude of a Stuart. But in the new patent no mention was made of the additional 100*l.*; and even the annual butt of sherry was discontinued. The king apparently expected from these harsh terms to so useful a servant, that Dryden would understand the inconsistency of a Popish king keeping a Protestant poet. The hint seems to have been taken; for in March, 1685-6, Dryden received an additional 100*l.* a year, and the Romish Church one convert more.

We are not disposed, even if the coincidence be more than accidental, to judge Dryden harshly on account of his sudden conversion. He had been bred a Puritan in the household of one of the chiefest of saints: he had conformed, without exciting comment or censure from the world, to the Church of England; but whatever may have been his real sentiments, the grossness of his dramatic writings forbids us to suppose that his religious convictions were at any time very deep. We believe him to have been, in the main, a very amiable man, but there is no appearance of his having ever been a devout Protestant. He was of the faith of the

State, and probably thought that what its defender and his lords spiritual and temporal held, or professed to hold, was truth enough for a poet, whose bread depended upon his panegyrics and his popularity. He intimates indeed pretty broadly, in his "Hind and Panther," that he took his religion, even after his conversion to Romanism, pretty much on trust;\* and if Dryden were at any period of his life earnest in his creed, it was certainly when he wrote the "Life of St. Francis Xavier," and not when he wrote his "Spanish Friar."

The only poem of Dryden's which savours of attachment to the Church of England, is the "Religio Laici," produced early in 1673, rather more than twelve months after the appearance of "Absalom and Achitophel." This is a statement in metre of the reasons of his belief in the church as by law established, and does not seem intended to serve any political purpose. But the weight of this statement is considerably lessened by an examination of the poem itself. It is an argument in verse, terse, logical, and epigrammatic. The most prominent portrait in it, however, is adopted from Chaucer, and the argument tends more to inculcate a sound moral life and its practical duties, than any especial reasons for preferring the doctrines and discipline of the Anglican establishment. If it were meant for any immediate purpose, and not merely as an exercise in metrical ratiocination, it was probably intended as an answer to those who accused the ex-Puritan and present Conformist of having no theological creed at all.

Dryden's improved salary was earned by increased energy in the service of his royal, and not very munificent patron. In defence of James he attacked the most skilful and experienced pamphleteers of the day. He shrunk from crossing swords neither with Stillingfleet, though armed at all points with ecclesiastical lore, nor with Burnet, clothed in worldly and diplomatic cunning, as with triple brass. He was Maître Jaques cook, and Maître Jaques coachman to the king: he defended in prose and in verse the most flagrant and insane measures of the government; he was neither alarmed by the counsels of Father Petre, nor disgusted by the servility of Rochester. His poem of the "Hind and Panther" is on all accounts an extraordinary production. Its wit is sharp and pleasant: its diction singularly harmonious: its reasoning coherent and impressive, and as an *ex parte* statement it scarcely admits of improvement. It is indeed now less known, because its interest is of a less historical kind, than that of "Absalom and Achitophel:" but at the moment

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\* "By education most have been misled:  
So they believe because they so were bred:  
The priest continues what the nurse began,  
And thus the child imposes on the man."

it appeared, its Romanist readers must have hailed it as the work of a poetical Bossuet, and expected from it either the conversion or the confusion of their opponents.

To ourselves indeed, perusing this polemical apologue without fear or favour of the controversy, its defects as a work of art are but too palpable. The allegory and the fable are throughout awkwardly blended. We do not indeed

“Ask Jean Jacques Rousseau,  
If beasts confabulate or no,”

but however expressive or acceptable it may have been to contemporaries, whose passions were excited by the controversy, to calmer judgments the features of the allegory appear repulsive. We can follow with patience Swift's delineation of Peter, Martin, and Jack: they are at least human personages, and, with allowance for their symbolical attributes, have some human interest. But it is a stretch beyond the bounds of fiction or allegory to follow the mazes of a controversy conducted by animals alone. There are few more insufferable apologues than Casti's “*Animali Parlanti*,” and Dryden's “*Hind and Panther*” is liable to equal objections. The Church of Rome is figured under the similitude of a milk-white hind, ever in peril of death, yet not doomed to destruction. All the baser animals are bent on her destruction—the Socinian fox, the Presbyterian wolf, the Independent bear, the Anabaptist boar. The timorous neutrals are typified by the cowardly hare; the Church of England by the panther, beautiful but spotted. They are equally hated by their common foes, and confer apart on their common danger; and the subjects of their conference are—the real presence, the jurisdiction of popes and councils, the Test Acts, the penal laws, Oates's perjuries, the ingratitude of the Cavalier party to the author of “*Hudibras*,” Burnet's intrigues and Stillingfleet's pamphlets—*quodcunque ostendis mihi sic, incredulus odi*.

Such an allegory could not be preserved for ten lines together with any chance of consistency. Its absurdity is obvious: its weariness fatal. Yet the skill of the author is as conspicuous as the defects of the plan. The “*Hind and Panther*” is not only the most remarkable literary production of the reign of James II., but is also second to none of Dryden's works in energy, harmony, and pathos.

The defects of this extraordinary poem were overlooked by the party whom it was intended to serve, but presented an ample scope for the invective and irony of their opponents. Its ingenious casuistry and melodious numbers could not protect it from attacks. Men were in no humour for such attempts to make the worse appear the better reason. The spots of the panther might be blemishes, but the whiteness of the hind was an insidious

mask, and an actual fraud. It had been more than once or twice incarnadined in the blood of the saints; it was the livery of priestly guile and political tyranny. Rejoinder and invective flew from all sides. The nicknames of "Bayes" and "Squab" were revived; the author was branded with the titles of infidel and apostate. The panegyric to Cromwell was printed beside the *Astræa Redux*; Shadwell discharged his venom and Settle his dulness. There was an "arrowy sleet" of pamphlets; there were hints that Rochester's cudgel had been well bestowed on the broad shoulders of "Poet Squab." But of the many satirical responses which appeared, that which most deeply affected Dryden was the joint production of two young men, who had recently quitted Cambridge. He could put up with the venal or envious sarcasms of ordinary libellers, but he was cut to the quick by the wit of Charles Montague and Matthew Prior. They were both young men and friends of Dryden, whose society they enjoyed in the literary coffee-houses of London. If we may credit Dean Lockier's authority, he was moved to tears by their fable of the "Country and City Mouse." He observed, "For two young fellows that I have always been very civil to, to use an old man in so cruel a manner!" He had been patient under Collier's rebuke, and disdained Martin Clifford's and Tom Brown's "Reflections." He was sitting where such ordinary scribes dare not soar. But Prior and Montague belonged to a different order of assailants. They had the ear of good society; they were rising favourites of the public, and held in the clubs a voice nearly as potential as Dryden himself. He may justly have begun to suspect that he had miscalculated the direction of public opinion, when even the frequenters of his realm at Wills coffee-house conspired against him. Court favour might be purchased too dear if it involved the loss of hardly-won popularity. His tenure of court favour was however destined to be brief. Within little more than a year after the publication of the "*Hind and Panther*;" within a few months after the appearance of his "*Britannia Rediviva*"—in which poem he had congratulated James and his Queen on the birth of a prince—the Romanist religion was proscribed in this realm, and the sovereign, his consort, and their infant were exiles, dependent on the charity of the French monarch. Dryden had committed himself so irretrievably to Popery, and had proved himself so formidable an antagonist of Protestantism under every form, that he could expect no favour, and scarcely forbearance, from the new dynasty. He had argued for the divine right of kings, and an elective monarch was seated on the throne. He had celebrated the birth of a genuine heir, and the baby-prince was accounted by at least two-thirds of the English people to be supposititious. Dryden was, in 1688, as much

a mark for royal and parliamentary aversion as Milton had been in 1660. But he did not possess Milton's tower of strength. Cromwell's Latin secretary had maintained the cause of civil and religious freedom, and had sacrificed his eye-sight to the "Defence of the English People." Dryden had been the advocate of civil and religious servitude, and had bartered for increase of pay his genius and former reputation. He had no pretensions to favour or forbearance. In August, 1689, he was deprived of his offices of poet-laureate and historiographer royal, with the further vexation of seeing them bestowed upon his old antagonist, the true-blue Protestant versifier, Shadwell. The latter end of Job was indeed worse than the beginning. For whereas, while Dryden wrote dedications, translations, and occasional poems in the service of Herringman, and plays for Davenant's theatre, he was merely a literary aspirant, with the world of letters before him, where to choose; now, in 1689, he, the most conspicuous of writers, had rendered himself one the most obnoxious of courtiers, and unluckily taken side with a Church which the nation abhorred, and with a king whom the nation rejected.

The appointment of Shadwell to the laureateship did not contribute to the literary credit of the government. A fat and bibulous harper rather disgraced than adorned King Arthur's court and table; and Dryden, although changed and fallen, was a greater man, even in popular estimation, in his obscure dwelling in Gerard-street, than Shadwell with his laurels at Whitehall.

Deprived of his pension, Dryden had now his stout heart, his active brain, and his ready right hand to rely upon for his support. He was flung to the ground, but he rose the stronger from the contact. He rebounded with the elasticity of youth from a complication of calamities that would have paralyzed most men. We begin to hold him in highest respect, when to all appearance he had sunk the lowest. His remaining years were devoted to a variety of labours, prodigious in quantity, and yet more remarkable for the vigour and elasticity of mind which they displayed.

The concluding decennium of his career was, indeed, the most honourable of his literary life. He had risen to fame and favour by writing insincere panegyrics and plays of more than questionable morality. The spirit of the age was servile, unprincipled, and profligate; and he had ministered to its servility, its laxity, and its licence, as much as any writer of the time. He had abused great gifts; he had followed corrupt fashions in literature; with the strength of Hercules he had wielded the distaff of Omphale. He was now thrown upon his own resources once again; he was now verging to the sere and yellow leaf of his years; he again sought his Mæcenas among the booksellers, only exchanging

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Herringman for Tonson. In the first instance, he had recourse to the stage, which he had relinquished for the preceding seven years. In the space of three years (1690-93), he produced two tragedies, two comedies, and an opera, and, with the exception of his last drama, "Love Triumphant," which was a signal failure, all these pieces met with complete success. It is impossible not to applaud the gallant way in which he confronted envy and opposition. It is impossible not to admire the freshness of his intellectual powers and the manifold resources at his command. He condescended to write dedications and elegiac poems, prologues and epilogues, to translate, to paraphrase, to do task-work and job-work for all who could afford to pay him. The Earl of Abingdon applied to him for a poem upon his deceased wife, as he applied to a sculptor for her monument; and for his verses entitled "Eleonora," Dryden received from his employer 500*l*. He collected and published his translations of the Greek and Latin poets; he rendered into English verse Juvenal and Persius. He commenced, in 1694, the most arduous of his labours, the translation of Virgil, and completed it by the close of 1696. It was published in the following July, and in August appeared the most popular of his poems, the "Ode on Alexander's Feast." Age could not, it seemed, stale, nor variety wither him; with advancing years his powers were strengthened and his imagination became more alert.

The expectation excited by his "Virgil," showed that the cloud of unpopularity had passed away. The hireling and convert of the expelled dynasty was after all a sturdy and invincible man, whom the fate of nations and the fall of thrones might supplant, but could not permanently depress. The nation, as Dr. Johnson remarks, seemed to consider its honour interested in the work. Dryden received assistance from all who could aid him in its performance. Mr. Gilbert Dolben presented him with as many editions of the original as he could procure; Addison furnished him with an Essay on the Georgics, and with arguments of the books of the *Æneid*. It was believed that the king would have accepted the dedication of the work, at least Jacob Tonson thought so, and directed the engraver of the plates to depict the pious *Æneas* with the prominent nose of William of Orange. But upon this point Dryden was inexorable. He had never recanted his Panegyric on the Great Protector; he refused now to burn incense upon the altar of the Dutch Jupiter. The Dedication of *Virgil* was inscribed with the names of three patrons, for which the author incurred the coarse vituperation of Jonathan Swift.

And as if this stupendous labour—which he says in a letter to Jacob Tonson, "would require seven years to perform exactly"—had only nerved Dryden for fresh employments, he contem-

plated, in 1698, the translation of Homer. He thought that "in his fiery way of writing," he could do the *Iliad* more justice than the *Æneid*. He finished one book of the "Tale of Troy Divine," but was diverted from this enterprise by a new engagement with Tonson. This was the volume of Fables from Chaucer and Boccaccio, on which Dryden's renown as a narrative poet mainly rests. We so far subscribe to the general opinion, that these adaptations of the great Italian and English *conteurs* display uncommon vigour, but we cannot assent to Mr. Bell's judgment, that they display a richer vein of fancy and more sweetness and grace than any of his numerous earlier works. It has always appeared to us, on the contrary, that in Dryden's hands, Boccaccio becomes prolix and Chaucer prosaic. Indeed, there are more serious objections to Dryden's Fables than any which can be raised on the score of taste. He has added to the indecencies of the Florentine, and rendered the simplicity of the "Canterbury Tales" vulgar and coarse.

As Dryden's poetical reputation is grounded in some measure upon the spirited narrative of this volume of Fables, we will pause for a moment upon a few passages in them, as compared with the corresponding portions in the original, in order to bring our censure to the test.

We will commence with that most charming of descriptions, the May-morning, and Emily doing observance to the season.

Chaucer wrote :

"Thus passeth year by year and day by day,  
Till it fell onès in a morrow of May,  
That Emily, that fairer was to seen  
Than is the lily upon his stalké green,  
And fresher than the May with flowrès new,  
For with the rosè-colour strove her hue  
(I n'ot which was the finer of them two)  
Ere it was day, as she was wont to do,  
She was arisen, and already dight,  
For May will have no sluggardly a-night :  
The season pricketh every gentle heart,  
And maketh him out of his sleep to start,  
And saith, Arise ! and do thine óbservance."

But Dryden writes :

"Thus year by year they pass and day by day,  
Till once ('twas on the morn of cheerful May)  
The young Emilia fairer to be seen,  
Than the fair lily on the flowery green,  
More fresh than May herself in blossoms new  
(For with the rosy colour strove her hue)  
Walked, as her custom was, before the day  
To do th' observance due to sprightly May :

For sprightly May commands our youth to keep  
 The vigils of her night, and breaks their sluggard sleep;  
 Each gentle breast with kindly warmth she moves:  
 Inspires new flames, revives extinguished loves."

"Bless thee, Chaucer, thou art translated" from a most loyal and observant painter of fresh and delicate nature into a dealer in rhymes "done to this pattern." Philemon Holland, the translator-general, as men called him on account of his versions of so many bulky ancients, never made a rougher piece of work than Dryden has done, with the passage generally, and in changing

"Than is the lily upon his stalkè green,"

into

"Than the fair lily on the flowery green."

But Dryden, it may be said, was not the man for drawing from nature, or penning amorous ditties all a summer's day. Let him then be tried with something of sterner mood.

Chaucer thus describes "The Temple of Mars"—

"First on the wall was painted a Forést  
 In which there wonneth neither man nor beast,  
 With knotty, gnarry, barren trées old  
 Of stubbès sharp and hideous to behold;  
 In which there ran a rumble and a swough  
 As though a storm would bursten every bough.  
 And downward from a hill under a bent  
 There stood the temple of Mars armipotent,  
 Wrought all of burnisht steel, of which th' entry  
 Was long and strait, and ghastly for to see;  
 And thereout came a rage and such a vise  
 That it made all the gatès for to rise:  
 The northern light in at the doore shone  
 For window on the wall ne was there none  
 Through which men mighten any light discern—"

Whereas Dryden's "Temple of Mars" might have been "turned out" at Birmingham—

"The landscape was a forest wide and bare;  
 Where neither beast nor human kind repair;  
 The fowl, that scent afar, the borders fly,  
 And shun the bitter blast, and wheel about the sky.  
 A cake of scurf lies baking on the ground,  
 And prickly stubs, instead of trees are found;  
 Or woods with knots and gnars deformed and old,  
 Headless the most and hideous to behold:  
 A rattling tempest through the branches went  
 That stripped them bare, and one sole way they bent.  
 Heaven froze above severe, the clouds congeal,  
 And through the crystal vault appeared the standing hail:

Such was the face without ; a mountain stood  
 Threatening from high, and overlooked the wood.  
 Beneath the low'ring brow and on a bent,  
 The temple stood of Mars armipotent ;  
 The frame of burnished steel, that cast a glare  
 From far, and seemed to thaw the freezing air.  
 A strait long entry to the temple led,  
 Blind with high walls, and horror over-head :  
 Thence issued such a blast and hollow roar,  
 As threatened from the hinge to heave the door ;  
 In, through that door, a northern light there shone  
 'Twas all it had, for windows there were none."

One line will serve as a sample of the transfiguration of this noble description of Chaucer's into "sound and fury" by Dryden, and then we will desist from the ungracious task of comparing the rhetorical poet with one of nature's making.

Dryden's

" *Woods* with knots and gnars deformed and old,"

seem to hint that the cabinet-maker might get a table out of them—but "a Forest"

"With knotty, gnarry, barren trees old"

is a description befitting the grove of the Eumenides. We are disposed to think that Jacob Tonson got the worst of the bargain, though Dryden threw in 1700 verses over and above the number stipulated for in the contract. The sale of the "Fables" was extremely slow ; even the author's death, which has often accelerated a lingering impression, did not increase the demand for them, and a second edition was not called for until 1713. We are less surprised at the tardiness of the sale at first than at the reputation which these Tales have acquired since.

The labours of Dryden were now fast approaching their close. Although his mental powers were unimpaired, he had long been suffering the penalties of the sedentary, and was afflicted with both gout and gravel ; and in December, 1699, erysipelas showed itself in one of his legs. Yet amid his intervals of ease, he continued to write with unremitting diligence and fortitude, and within a few weeks of his death produced his "Secular Masque ;" a Prologue and Epilogue for the revival of Fletcher's comedy of the "Pilgrim ;" and a Dialogue in the Madhouse between two Distracted Lovers. His career ended with a dramatic and a satirical composition. The "Secular Masque" is an allegorical delineation of the reigns of the three Stuart kings, under the respective influences of Diana, Mars, and Venus. In the Prologue, he brayed Blackmore in a mortar, but the Knight was as indestructible as Dulness itself, and survived for the recreation of younger wits. In the Epilogue, he attacked his old adversary

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Collier, but with so much forbearance, that this parting tap from the greatest master of fence bears more the appearance of courtesy than of censure.

To a shattered frame and a corpulent habit, the slightest accident is often fatal. A neglected inflammation became a gangrene, for which amputation of the limb was pronounced the only cure. But Dryden refused to submit to the operation, saying that "he was an old man, and had not long to live by course of nature, and therefore did not care to part with one limb, at such an age, to preserve an uncomfortable life on the rest." His patience was not put to a long trial. He expired at his house in Gerard-street, on the 1st of May, 1700, and his remains now repose in Westminster Abbey between the graves of Chaucer and Cowley, his earliest and his latest masters in verse.

We have dwelt upon the works and character of Dryden, not with the vain hope that he will ever again become a general favourite, or with the desire of extenuating or exaggerating defects. We believe indeed that in an earlier or a later age, his faults would have been infinitely fewer, and his name might have ranked second only to the very first. It was his peculiar misfortune to have fallen upon evil times, and to have lacked strength of will to resist their influence. In an earlier age he would perhaps have rescued King Arthur from Blackmore's clutches, and added a national epic poem to our literature: in a later, he would have taken a high station as an historian or a critic. But though these great prizes were denied to him, and two-thirds of his numerous writings have become obsolete, his indefatigable industry, his various knowledge, his robust eloquence, and his unsurpassed powers of satire, will always entitle his name to respect, and afford motives, wherever English literature is cultivated, for cherishing the healthier and happier portions of both his Verse and Prose. The genius, indeed, displayed in his best works indicates powers never fully developed by their owner, or opportunities never placed within his reach; and if it be allowed to infer from what he actually wrote, that, under happier circumstances, he would have written otherwise; if we regard him, for a moment, as contemporary either with Ben Jonson, on the one hand, or with Thomson, Goldsmith, and Gray, on the other, we shall not refuse to admit, that of all Pope's most appropriate epithets, not one is more expressive or more mournful, than that which he has prefixed to the name of John Dryden,—

"Unhappy Dryden!—in all Charles's days,  
Roscommon only boasts unspotted lays."

### ART. III.—OUR ARMY : ITS CONDITION, AND ITS WANTS.

1. *Second Report from the Select Committee on Army and Ordnance Expenditure, &c.* July, 1849.
2. *Report from the Select Committee on Army and Ordnance Expenditure, &c.* August, 1850.
3. *Report from the Select Committee on Small Arms, &c.* May, 1854.
4. *The Military Forces and Institutions of Great Britain and Ireland: their Constitution, Administration, and Government, Military and Civil.* By H. Byerley Thomson, Esq. London: Smith, Elder, & Co.

OF late years much has been written, and still more has been spoken, respecting the defective state of the British Army. Volunteer corps and militia, the Duke of Wellington's letter to Sir John Burgoyne, and Sir E. B. Head on the defenceless state of Great Britain, the "Six-Mile Bridge" affair, and the Perry case, and last, but not least, the present war, have, one and all, been fertile subjects for praise and abuse of the military organization of this country. Yet, amidst all this clamour, all this praise, this letter grumbling, and leading-article wrath, we appear entirely to have lost sight of the question.—"What is our army?" It is the Horse Guards, says one; the Ordnance, says another; the Minister at War, says a third. But who is to blame if anything goes wrong? Lord Raglan, Lord Hardinge, the Minister at War, Doctor Smith, Doctor Hall, Lord Eland, Major Dalgetty, any one, every one, just as it suits the whim of the moment. But, an army! Is it not the right arm of the nation? Is it not that portion of its own flesh and blood which is devoted to protect the remainder, and enable the body and brain to toil, and labour, and think, without fear of molestation? And what sane man is there who will go on through life's journey unmindful whether his right arm is suffering from disease or not? Yet we go on grumbling and finding fault, year after year, with every portion of our army, and never make a single reformation in it. We say our infantry make bad soldiers on the outposts; that our cavalry horses are unfit for war; that our artillery is defective; commissariat bad; the Ordnance Office a public nuisance, and the Ministry at War devoid of brains; and, satisfied with having said it, we leave bad alone.

Whence does this carelessness arise? Whence this feeling of the necessity that some great change should be effected, and this





De Quincy



not only feel safe against all Russian attacks, but by fitting out a fleet upon the western shores of the Caspian, to communicate with the eastern, and by throwing open their ports in the Black Sea to all nations, they might at a blow annihilate the influence Russia in Persia, and divert the whole stream of her present commerce into those channels which brought their riches to the Emperors of Byzantium.\*

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ART. VII.—THOMAS DE QUINCEY AND HIS WORKS.

1. *Autobiographic Sketches*, Vols. I. and II. James Hogg, 1853-4.
2. *Logic of Political Economy*. W. Blackwood and Sons, 1844.
3. *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater, and Suspiria de Profundis*, with portrait; *Biographical Essays; Miscellaneous Essays; The Cæsars; Life and Manners; Literary Reminiscences*, 2 vols.; *Narrative and Miscellaneous Papers*, 2 vols.; *Essays on the Poets, &c.*, 1 vol.; *Historical and Critical Essays*, 2 vols.; *Letters to a Young Man, &c.*; *Philosophical Writers, &c.*, 2 vols., 1852-4. Ticknor, Reed, and Fields, Boston, U. S.

IT is now some years since the all-powerful Sydney Smith was startled from complacent belief in his own infallibility by a young unknown American traveller: "We, on our side the Atlantic,

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\* Among the works whose titles we have prefixed to this article, those of Moritz Wagner and of Bodenstedt, must be regarded as the most important, inasmuch as they are founded upon direct knowledge of the Caucasian country and people, and contain much information supplied to the travellers themselves by Russian eye-witnesses of the facts. Wagner's book is particularly interesting, as the author had already travelled in Algeria, and could compare the struggle of the French with the Kabyles, with that going on the Caucasus; and it contains, in addition, an exceedingly graphic picture of the Crimea, and of the Cossacks of the Line. Bodenstedt, on the other hand, has furnished us with the fullest picture of the eastern Caucasians. The articles in the appendix to the *Conversations Lexicon*, "*Die Gegenwart*," are also very good, and appear to be derived from original sources, which is a great deal more than we can say for the pamphlet fifth on our list, and just published. The admirable essay on "*The Progress and Present Position of Russia in the East*," has already been noticed with the praise which it deserves. Ivan Golovin's book, compiled from various sources, which he mentions, is the only one in English, from which even the most meagre account of Schamyl and his battles may be gathered. Written by a Russian exile, the style of the book is somewhat un-English, but readers unacquainted with German will find in it much valuable and interesting information. We are greatly indebted to Prof. Koch for his large and excellent map, without which we should have found it exceedingly difficult to understand the nature of Caucasian warfare.

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often venture to revise your criticisms, and rejudge your judgments,"—was the astounding assertion of one who is *now* among the leaders of his country's senate. No wonder the great reviewer looked down with scorn upon the Yankee youth!—no wonder his admiring circle of dilettanti Whigs stood aghast at the audacity of the speaker, and the strangeness of the remark!

Times have changed since then; and now, even Sydney Smith would be fain to admit that among the many tests of the permanent merit of an English work, none, perhaps, is sounder than the judgment of an American public.

In literature, as in everything else, the value of the criticism varies directly with the impartiality of the critic; and, therefore, of all criticisms, is the verdict of posterity most valuable and just. Hardly inferior then will be the opinion of a nation, which, while speaking the same language as ourselves, is removed by space, as is posterity by time, from the jealousies and fashions of the English world of letters; which, like posterity, can have no interest to serve by an injudicious praise of one author, nor malice to gratify by an indiscriminate censure of another, and which, for the most part, judging fairly and dispassionately of the current literature of England, will in general but anticipate the sentence of future ages. Of this fact the English public is becoming gradually aware. It cannot but remember that Carlyle was recognised in America long before England had perceived his genius and his strength. It knows how the most graceful "*vers de société*" in the language lay forgotten among musty periodicals and reviews, till America had collected the poems of Mackworth Praed. It was America who first collected and reprinted the admirable miscellanies of James Martineau; and it was America who first republished the vagrant articles of the "*English Opium-Eater*."

The *name* of Thomas De Quincey is doubtless well known to all our readers. His *writings* (except, indeed, his celebrated *chef-d'œuvre*) are, we suspect, known to very few of them. Of course this chiefly arises from the fact that "*Blackwood*," and other magazines, have for many years monopolized his literary talent, and that few, if any, of his later productions were ever printed in a separate form. And yet we cannot but wonder that more curiosity has not been excited among the reading world about a man whose life presents so strange a psychological study; and whose writings are filled with passages of a power and beauty which have never been surpassed by any other prose writer of the age. Of the peculiar charm of Mr. De Quincey's style, we shall dwell at large hereafter. Our first duty must be to sketch the life and character of the man himself. That this is a task of no little delicacy, while Mr. De Quincey is still at Edinburgh, and still contributing to "*Tait's Magazine*," or

“Hogg’s Instructor,” we are well aware. But, on the other hand, in reviewing an autobiography, we must, perforce, criticise the autobiographer, especially when his life contains a lesson and a warning which are not less instructive than the narrative of that life is fascinating. Two things moreover we will readily promise. We will judge Mr. De Quincey by his own writings, deliberately given to the public, and not by vulgar gossip or doubtful anecdote; and we will spare him far more than he has ever spared himself or others.

The mere *outward* events of Mr. De Quincey’s life, though the least important part of it, are not without their interest—an interest increased by the graphic power of his descriptions, and his subtle analysis of the feelings which particular scenes called forth.

Before the publication of the English series of “Autobiographic Sketches” is completed, we are still often obliged to refer to some four volumes of the American reprint. The “Literary Reminiscences” gives us an account of his intercourse with many of those great authors of twenty years ago, of whom he is now almost the only living representative. The “Confessions of an English Opium-Eater,” and the “Suspiria de Profundis,” tell us of an existence almost, we would hope, unequalled in its horror:—they show us a character endowed with many noble gifts, and an intellect at once powerful and acute, and they show us intellect and character distorted by one fatal influence. In the fourth volume, “Life and Manners,” we have isolated passages in the author’s life—scenes of which he has been the witness—narratives which have made deep impression upon his mind.

“Were I,” says Mr. De Quincey, “to return thanks to Providence for all the separate blessings of my early situation, I would single out these four as worthy of special commemoration: that I lived in a rustic solitude; that this solitude was in England; that my infant feelings were moulded by the gentlest of sisters; finally, that I and they were dutiful and loving members of a pure, holy, and magnificent Church.”

Such were the circumstances of his early childhood. Educated with young sisters, and in a secluded suburb of Manchester,—of a temperament already morbidly sensitive, and with faculties sadly too precocious,—the boy of six years old received in the death of a favourite sister a shock from which, perhaps, he never entirely recovered. The rude nature of an elder brother, the hatred of an old family-servant, the companionship of two poor idiot-girls—all these, too, threw a shadow over him, and, destroying the fresh healthiness of boyhood, left him to feed upon his own wild fancies and sad thoughts. Much of his existence was “a dream within a dream.” He had an island kingdom of “Gombroon,” just as Hartley Coleridge held sway over “Ejuxria,”—unlike

Hartley Coleridge, that his imaginings took the form of responsibilities and duties weighing heavily upon him,—not of a sovereignty and pomp that redeemed the dull realities of life.

In his twelfth year he went to a public school at Bath; and here, again, the peace-loving and meditative boy finds that to contend with somebody was still his fate. The chief trouble of these school-days was that he wrote his Latin verses *too* well, and the praises of his master could not compensate for the envious hatred of his schoolfellows. But after some three years spent here, and at a smaller school at Winkfield, Mr. De Quincey bade farewell for a time to the griefs of boyhood, and “stepped ankle-deep into the world.” Among the friends of his own age to whom he was most attached was Lord Westport, the eldest son of Lord Altamont (afterwards Marquis of Sligo). Under the chaperonage of this sprig of Irish aristocracy he visited Ireland in the spring of 1800. Here he was fortunate enough to witness a ceremony of much splendour in itself, but of an import so deep and laden with such grave results that the outward show was the least part of its interest, alike for actor and spectator. It was the last meeting of the Irish House of Lords, when the “Union Bill” had received the royal assent, and when, for the last time, the old Parliament House at Dublin should be filled with the old legislative Council of the Nation. It was a striking sight, and the reflections to which it gave birth were years afterwards well described by the English boy who beheld it.

We must pass hastily by the adventures and incidents that crowd these years (1800-2) of Mr. De Quincey's life. There are sketches of the great people whom he met; accounts of an interview with the king, and a ball at Frogmore; an episode of touching beauty about a younger brother; a visit to Lord Carbery's; and all this, perhaps of slight moment in itself, is interwoven with noble thought and gorgeous sentiment, till the tissue, that would at first sight appear so poor and threadbare, glows with the warmest and the richest hues.

We now approach the most important event in our author's history,—an event which, though at the time hardly marked, was the pivot whereon the remainder of his life should turn, which should steal away his happiness, but leave him fame instead. There is only one year, or thereabouts, from Mr. De Quincey's return from Ireland to the time when he first yielded to the fascination of opium: but this year was memorable. Mr. De Quincey had been placed under the charge of a tutor for whom he felt the profound contempt that a clever boy always feels for a pompous pedant. He insisted on being at once sent to the University: his guardians refused; so at last taking the matter into his own hands, he got out by night from his tutor's house, and, having

resigned his trunk to the tender mercies of a carrier, "set off on foot, carrying a small parcel with some articles of dress under his arm; a small English poet in one pocket, and a small duodecimo volume, containing about nine plays of Euripides, in the other." He now commenced a solitary walking-tour through Wales; at one time lodging for weeks together at a farm-house; at another time subsisting "on blackberries, hips and haws, or on the casual hospitalities which I now and then received in return for such little services as I had an opportunity of rendering. Sometimes I wrote letters of business for cottagers, who happened to have relations in Liverpool or London; more often I wrote love letters to their sweethearts for young women who had lived as servants in Shrewsbury, or other towns on the English border." From Wales he moves to London; and here for upwards of sixteen weeks he tells us that he suffered "the physical anguish of hunger in various degrees of intensity: but as bitter, perhaps, as any human being can have suffered who has survived it." Finally, indeed, chiefly by the assistance of Lord Westport, he gave up this nomad life, and soon afterwards gained his old wish for a University career: but the trials and horrors of these four months must have told fearfully upon his delicate constitution.

In no other chapter of his life do we trace more clearly the noble character which the "English Opium-Eater" originally possessed. We see the independence of the proud and sensitive school-boy; the patience with which the voluntary outcast endured these self-inflicted torments rather than humble himself to a pedagogue, or tolerate the injustice of a guardian; above all, we see the sympathy which he showed toward those whose physical sufferings—hardly less intolerable than his own—were aggravated a thousand fold by the sense of shame and degradation. Among the many readers of Mr. De Quincey's "Confessions," there is probably none on whom the story of poor Ann has not left an indelible impression. Mrs. Gaskell, in her beautiful novel of "Ruth," has taught the cold and Puritanic world how much of good there may be even among the most despised and sinful; but the fiction of "Ruth" grows pale by the side of the true story of that houseless wanderer of the London streets. How touching are these expressions from the English author to this poor girl—when time and chance had severed them, and he could never render service to *her*, who, wretched as she was, had still been his benefactress and friend:—"I sought her," he writes, "in hope: so it was for years: now I should fear to see her!—and her cough, which grieved me when I parted from her, is now my consolation. I now wish to see her no more, but think of her more gladly as one long since laid in the grave; in the grave, I would hope, of a Magdalen."

It was in the autumn of 1804 that Mr. De Quincey was first inoculated with the taste for opium. He had been suffering from rheumatic pains in the face and head; a College acquaintance, whom he accidentally met, (on such accidents how often do consequences the most momentous hang!) recommended opium; he entered an unknown druggist's shop, and, like Thalaba in the witches' lair, wound about himself the first threads of a coil which it should tax his utmost efforts to shake off. From this time the outward events of his life are only interesting as they modify and control his internal experiences and suffering: and it is upon these last that the attention must now be concentrated. For many years the "Opium-Eater" lived in the Lake districts of Westmoreland, the friend of Wordsworth and Southey; and finally settled down among the "Blackwood" clique at Edinburgh, with Wilson, Alison, and Aytoun, as his colleagues and allies. Those of our readers who may desire to know something more of Mr. De Quincey's present mode of life, we would refer to Mr. Gilfillan's "Literary Portraits." They may there read how his neckcloth is fastened, and what is his style of conversation (with Mr. Gilfillan)! They may there, too, we may add, *en passant*, learn to acquire a happy flow of tumid eloquence, and a very desirable command of most incongruous imagery.\*

The most marked peculiarity of Mr. De Quincey's character—a peculiarity which first induced, and was then exaggerated by, the constant use of opium—is his extreme sensibility. In itself perhaps a blessing, yet is this sensibility the most dangerous gift the gods can give to man. Piquing himself on his refinement, the man of sensibility will too often drink the deepest of the cup of dissipation. Shrinking from contact with the vulgar world, he is constantly craving for that world's admiration and sympathy, and will readily offer up to it the most sacred of his emotions, if the incense of praise do but rise around the sacrifice. He is—

"Now yearning for a world's wide brotherhood,  
Now counting failings of his best friend crimes."†

Such has been the influence of this exquisite sensibility upon Thomas De Quincey. If it has prompted him to acts of generosity like that mentioned by Cottle in his reminiscences of Coleridge—it has also made him so bitterly unjust to Wordsworth, and so forgetful of his unnumbered kindnesses, and his reverend old age, that his best friends cannot excuse his conduct. He first

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\* Perhaps Mr. Gilfillan's Essay on Shelley may be read with still greater advantage than that on Mr. De Quincey. Shelley is likened to a wheel of Ezekiel's chariot, to a builder of the Tower of Babel, to a peacock, to a "playful but pensive Peri," and to various other things and persons equally suggestive.

† Payn's "Stories from Boccaccio," p. 94.

placed Wordsworth as an Idol, on too high a pedestal, and then prompted by some imagined slight to his most sensitive vanity, he turned Iconoclast, and filled page after page with sneer and innuendo. This same characteristic, which would, in the case of another, have made him so clear-sighted to any want of delicacy, has given him such a morbid thirst for sympathy that he opens to the readers of a magazine the innermost recesses of his heart, and tells what *they* at least feel, that no stranger should ever have been told. Again, it was this sensibility which first gave him the relish for the self-indulgent habit which was for many long years the bane of his existence.

We have sometimes heard expressions of wonder that one of Mr. De Quincey's character should fall a prey to a merely sensual gratification. They know little, however, of human nature, who do not see that this sensitive temperament is itself the cause of greatest danger. Those nerves so finely strung—will they not vibrate to every touch alike impure and holy?—Those senses so exquisitely formed, that a thousand trifles of sunset or of melody have for them a charm which coarser natures can never feel,—will they not also throb as readily at the excitement of more earthy pleasure?—That deep yearning for beauty or for joy—will it not hurry along, till bitter experience has taught that the pleasurable and the fair too often leave behind no richer fruit than disease that wears the body, and remorse that eats away the soul? Was it not so with Charles Lamb over his bottle and his pipe?—with Keats in his London home?—with Hartley Coleridge in that quiet Grasmere valley?—But still more fascinating than the influences which enthralled these, is the temptation which could subdue such men as the author of the “Ancient Mariner,” and Mr. De Quincey.

The use of opium is of great antiquity. It was probably known to Homer, and is, in all likelihood, the drug “Nepenthe,” which (Odyssey, iv. 221) Helen of Troy passes round to her husband's guests.\* The Romans were cognisant of its powers, and the

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\* This passage is so curious, that we subjoin it as translated by Pope:—

“Meantime, with genial joy to warm the soul,  
Bright Helen mix'd a mirth-inspiring bowl;  
Temper'd with drugs of sov'reign use, to assuage  
The boiling bosom of tumultuous rage;  
To clear the cloudy front of wrinkled care,  
And dry the tearful sluices of despair;  
Charm'd with the virtuous draught, th' exalted mind  
All sense of woe delivers to the wind.  
Though on the blazing pile his parent lay,  
Or a loved brother groan'd his life away,  
Or darling son, oppress'd by ruffian force,  
Fell breathless at his feet, a mangled corse;  
From morn to eve, impassive and serene,

more Western European nations have long placed it among the most valued articles in their *materia medica*.

As a luxury, however, it has been to Turkey, Persia, and China, that its consumption has been almost entirely confined. In the two former countries, the practice of *eating* opium prevails, while in China it is generally *smoked* through wooden pipes. This habit, though not in its more pernicious Chinese form, is now, we fear, spreading among ourselves, especially in the eastern counties; and we are assured by Professor Johnston, that the use of opium in England has increased threefold during the last fifteen years. Much as we regret it, we do not think this fact surprising; nor, indeed, are we sure that the very book—"Confessions of an English Opium-Eater"—which, more than anything else, should have checked the unnatural craving—has not tended to the contrary result. The reader, though terrified by the thought of the final consequences of opium,—though shrinking from the Nemesis which *will* come,—always conceives that he may leave off long before the hour of retribution has arrived. He will drink of the cup of pleasure, but sparingly and with reason; and meanwhile, what a cup of pleasure it is,—even as Mr. De Quincey describes it, when its aftertaste of bitterness might be supposed to have deadened the remembrance of its first intoxicating flavour. And so another tries it: and pleasure continues what curiosity had begun, and necessity compels the use when pleasure has quite passed away: and then,—if then the opium-eater can refrain, he may live on through years of suffering and regret,—or, if the effort be too great, he sinks off into an untimely grave.

There is, moreover, an insidiousness about opium, of which no other sensual gratification partakes. It seems scarcely a gratification of the *senses* at all: it brightens up the intellect,—calls back forgotten ideas,—and at once composes and stimulates the brain. We will call witnesses on this point. "The opium-eater," says Mr. De Quincey, in Part II. of his "Confessions," "feels that *the diviner part of his nature* is uppermost; that is, the moral affections are in a state of cloudless serenity, and over all is the great light of the majestic intellect." Dr. Allen, of Lowell, Massachusetts, from whose very valuable work on "The Opium Trade," we have derived much information, assures us, that the

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The man, entranced, would view the dreadful scene.  
 These drugs, so friendly to the joys of life,  
 Bright Helen learn'd from Rome's imperial wife,  
 Who sway'd the sceptre, where prolific Nile  
 With various simples clothes the fattened soil."

This passage is quoted by Herodotus (ii., 16) in proof of Homer's knowledge of Egypt and its products, a knowledge which might explain his allusion to opium, as that drug has constantly gone by the name of the "*Thebaic tincture*."

first and most common effect of opium is, "to exalt the feelings into a state of great activity and buoyancy, producing unusual *vivacity and brilliancy in conversation*;" and, at the same time, the most "profound state of perfect self-complacency,—all idea of labour, care, and anxiety vanish at once from the mind." The testimony of Mr. Tiffany, and others quoted by Dr. Allen, is to the same effect, and shows us by what spell opium tempts to their destruction the highly educated and the refined.

It is, however, in the "land of dreams" that opium exerts its greatest power. It would draw us too far from our subject, were we to enter at full into the rationale of dreams; but we cannot entirely pass over the phenomena which opium induces when the opium-eater has fallen into his morbid sleep. Everyone remembers the passage in the *Æneid*, where Virgil describes the gates through which dreams come trooping up to the world of men—the gate of Horn, and the gate of Ivory; the one opening only to the true, the other thronged with visions false and vain. We, too, believe in two different gates (to use Virgil's simile), by which dreams come to us; they are the gates of Memory and Imagination; and through them appear phantoms of what has been, and fancies of what might have been, or may be.

In dreams of the first order, the faces we once loved are again around us—the old house, which is ours perhaps no longer, reclaims us as its inmates: old joys and griefs of years ago rise up more vivid than those of yesterday. And yet there is a change in everything. We see everything through a new atmosphere. It is our present self which haunts the old scenes:—it is the matured man who lingers over spots known only to the unformed boy:—and *he* is happy, who, when such a dream has past away, has no sense of having polluted with an unholy presence places which are hallowed in his affections; who has no cause to mourn the contrast between the present and the past,—or the change which life and time have been slowly working in his soul since those early boyish days. Now the effect of opium in a dream depending upon Memory, is, to call up in livelier colours scenes which are remembered, and so to excite the brain that, what in waking hours has been quite forgotten, returns again fresh to the sleeper's thoughts. But it is in dreams of the second class—those produced by Imagination—that the force of opium is displayed in its most striking form. Imagination is rather a combining than a creative power. She seizes on various objects, and harmonizes them into some new whole: she places them side by side, and with subtle skill traces out their hidden resemblances, and the analogies of their being. Now opium, which is so ready to reproduce, is no less ready to reconstruct. The incidents—from life, from books, from nature—which the use of opium has aided Memory to

recal,—are the materials from which Imagination—stimulated to unnatural effort by the same strange drug—raises her most gorgeous fabrics. It was in dreams like these that Coleridge saw—

“The Abyssinian maid,  
As on her dulcimer she played,  
Coming from Mount Abora.”\*

It was to opium that Mr. De Quincey owed the following vision of his early life, which visited him in his college rooms at Oxford. Except, indeed, in the Jewish Scriptures, and a dream in Jean Paul Richter's “Fruit and Flower Pieces,” we know nothing of the kind more splendid than this:—

“Once again, after twelve years' interval, the nursery of my childhood expanded before me; my sister was moaning in bed; and I was beginning to be restless with fears not intelligible to myself. Once again, the elder nurse, but now dilated to colossal proportions, stood as upon some Grecian stage with her uplifted hand, and, like the superb Medea towering amongst her children in the nursery of Corinth, smote me senseless to the ground. Again, I am in the chamber with my sister's corpse; again the pomps of life rise up in silence; the glory of summer, the Syrian sunlights, the frost of death. Dream forms itself mysteriously within dream; within these Oxford dreams remoulds itself continually, the trance in my sister's chamber, the blue heavens, the everlasting vault, the soaring billows, the throne steeped in the thought (but not the sight) of ‘who might sit thereon,’ the flight, the pursuit, the irrecoverable steps of my return to earth. Once more, the funeral procession gathers; the priest in his white surplice stands waiting, with a book by the side of an open grave; the sacristan is waiting with his shovel; the coffin has sunk; the dust to dust has descended. Again, I was in the church on a heavenly Sunday morning. The golden sunlight of God slept amongst the heads of his apostles, his martyrs, his saints; the fragment from the litany, the fragment from the clouds, awoke again the lawny beds that went up to scale the heavens, awoke again the shadowy arms that went downward to meet them. Once again arose the swell of the anthem, the burst of the Hallelujah chorus, the storm, the trampling movement of the choral passion, the agitation of my own trembling sympathy, the tumult of the choir, the wrath of the organ. Once more I, that wallowed in the dust, became he that rose up to the clouds; and now all was bound up into unity; the first state and the last were melted into each other as in some sunny glorifying haze. For high in heaven hovered a gleaming host of faces, veiled with wings, around the pillows of the dying children. And such beings sympathize equally with sorrow that grovels and with sorrow that soars. Such beings pity alike the children that are languishing in death, and the children that live only to languish in tears.”†

But a change very soon comes over “the spirit of the dream”

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\* *Vision of Kubla Khan*. “Coleridge's Poems.”

† “Autobiographic Sketches,” vol. i. pp. 26, 27.

of the habitual opium-eater. No longer grand or lovely forms—but dark and horrible phantoms—hover about his couch. His waking hours are spent alternately in remorseful struggles against the baneful influence, and despairing returns to what is now the only relief that earth affords. “I know full well the evidences of “the pernicious drug,”—writes the affectionate Bristol bookseller, Cottle, to Coleridge, in hopes yet to wean him from destruction;—“all around you behold the wild eye! the sallow countenance! “the tottering step! the trembling hand! the disordered frame! “and yet will you not be awakened to a sense of your danger, and, “I must add, your guilt?” But Coleridge grew from bad to worse. The lofty theologian, who threw over Unitarianism because, forsooth, of its unbelief and the coldness of its morality, could yet condescend, under the influence of opium, to deceive his best friends, to say what he knew to be untruthful, to act as, a few years ago, he would have shrunk from believing possible to the most weak and vicious man. Mr. De Quincey, when in the same sad state of prostration showed himself of stronger and nobler metal. Though suffering the greatest anguish—an anguish increased whenever he refrained—he determined to shake off the fatal spell. It was a long struggle, and perhaps it never entirely succeeded. But the *effort* was much; and even a partial success helped to preserve life, and helped to restore his own self-respect, and the regard of those who knew him.

In passing from the life of the man to the works of the author, we are exchanging a picture of moral weakness for one of intellectual strength: yet even in this strength do we find evidence of the enervating effects of a life of self-indulgence. “*The trail of the serpent is over it all.*” With a genius so original,—with such stores of learning—such depth of insight,—and such subtlety of thought,—Mr. De Quincey has given us no one really great work. He has written on almost every subject, but has exhausted none. He has thrown out hints and suggestions of the utmost value, but has left it to others to follow them laboriously up. He has acquired a style of the rarest brilliancy and richness, but he is constantly diminishing its force—now by his capricious use of words, and now by the weary length of his digressions.

His writings are like John Stirling’s conversation—“beautifullest sheet lightning not to be condensed into thunderbolts.”\*

In the preface to the first volume of “Autobiographic Sketches,” the author has divided his writings into three classes:—

I. “Those which propose primarily to amuse the reader, but which may occasionally happen to reach a higher station, where

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\* Carlyle’s “Life of Sterling,” p 55.

amusement passes into impassioned interest; such as the 'Autobiographic Sketches.'"

II. "Those addressing themselves purely, or at least primarily, to the intellect; such as the 'Essays.'"

III. "As modes of impassioned prose, ranging under no precedents that I am aware of in literature, 'The English Opium-Eater,' and 'Suspiria de Profundis.'"

Undoubtedly, an author *ought* to be able to classify his own works better than any one else can do for him; and yet this classification of Mr. De Quincey's own is—*pace dixerimus*—far from satisfactory. In the first place, the very finest passages from the "Suspiria," (except indeed one comparing man's mind to some old *palimpsest*), have been intercalated among the Autobiographic Sketches. Again, the "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater," if the most peculiar and the best written part, is still only a part, of the general autobiography. A third and still greater disadvantage in this arrangement is that it includes under one head, papers so dissimilar as "The Household Wreck;" "The Knocking in Macbeth," and Mr. De Quincey's own life.

Surely a far better, as a far more obvious arrangement, would be into

I. Autobiography.

II. Essays.

III. Narrative Papers.

Adopting then this classification, for our own guidance at least, we will first advert to the autobiography—including the Literary Reminiscences of the American edition. Of this autobiography, we have already given the outline; but there are still some points upon which we must be more explicit, and show where and how Mr. De Quincey has marred the general beauty of his sketches.—We doubt whether in the language there is anything more affectingly beautiful than the chapter entitled "Afflictions of Childhood," which opens the English edition. It is full of such noble passages as this description of a child's sense of solitude.

"God speaks to children also in dreams, and by the oracles that lurk in darkness. But in solitude, above all things, when made vocal to the meditative heart by the truths and services of a national church, God holds with children 'communion undisturbed.' Solitude, though it may be silent as light, is, like light, the mightiest of agencies; for solitude is essential to man. All men come into this world alone; all leave it alone. Even a little child has a dread, whispering consciousness, that if he should be summoned to travel into God's presence, no gentle nurse will be allowed to lead him by the hand, nor mother to carry him in her arms, nor little sister to share his trepidations. King and priest, warrior and maiden, philosopher and child, all must walk those mighty galleries alone. The solitude, therefore, which in this

world appals or fascinates a child's heart, is but the echo of a far deeper solitude, through which he has already passed, and of another solitude, deeper still, through which he has to pass: reflex of one solitude, prefiguration of another."\*

This chapter is still more striking from its depth of pathos, and outpouring of the author's heart. Personally, we feel most grateful for it; but when we have laid the book aside, and judgment claims the place which emotion had usurped—the odious thought *will* obtrude itself—How could any one who really felt so deeply publish it to the world? Mr. De Quincey, in his preface, hopes that there is no trace of vanity in thus exposing his most sacred confidences. We can see none in the thoughts or language. The story of his sister's death is told with the utmost delicacy and feeling. But why is the story told at all? How could the author—presuming that he has not exaggerated his grief—endure to parade it to the world in print? We do not understand the state which lays bare to view the sufferings of the body: we have still less sympathy with that which exposes all the anguish of the mind. While we regard this chapter as the finest piece of writing that even Mr. De Quincey ever penned, we cannot but lose some little of our esteem for the writer of it. Nor is this the only instance in which Mr. De Quincey forfeits the respect of his reader by his want of a decent reverence towards himself. The introduction of anecdotes, or allusions which have no other point than a somewhat scandalous piquancy, argues a carelessness to refinement, which we can neither account for nor excuse. It is utterly unworthy of the author, and it tends to destroy that kindly interest which the reader might otherwise feel; and which, according to his own showing, the author is inclined to value very highly.

Less blamable indeed—but no less a blemish—is the tone of depreciation which is employed towards many of the greatest of modern literary men. Scarcely any one entirely escapes unscathed; and no one, we believe, if he unfortunately differ from Mr. De Quincey in politics. Sometimes, should he happen to be too illustrious for indiscriminate abuse, he is only damned with the very faintest praise; should he have no such claim for consideration, he is damned without any praise at all. Mr. Roscoe had “on most subjects the feebleness of a mere belle-lettreist;” Dr. Shepherd was “a buffoon;” “the cynicism of Hazlitt was the envy of a discontented nature;” Watson, the kind old bishop of Llandaff, was “coarse even to obtuseness in his sensibilities,” “a querulous egotist,” and one who “at his own table talked openly as a Socinian;”—while the sketch of Dr. Parr is so caricatured as hardly to be recognisable.

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\* “Autobiographic Sketches,” vol. i. pp. 24, 25.

But if it is dangerous to be a political opponent of Mr. De Quincey, it is still more dangerous to have been his personal friend. Sergeant Talfourd had, with considerate and pious reserve, drawn a veil over the sad history of poor Elia's sister: Mr. De Quincey, in writing for a magazine, persists, "out of veneration for this admirable lady, in refusing to raise the veil," and then, with a refinement of delicacy, lingers for some pages, playing round the subject; casting out hints, and quoting poetry, carefully italicised; thus,

"A trouble in her strong dark eye,  
A remnant of *uneasy light*,  
A flash of somewhat overbright."

*Literary Remin.* vol. i. p. 89.

We find it, we own, difficult to express our appreciation of this enigmatical breach of friendly confidence. The tone adopted towards Wordsworth we have already mentioned, and we will not dwell longer upon a painful subject; except, indeed, to add that our author's intimacy with the poet has enabled him to give various pleasant details about Wordsworth's wife and sister, and to rake up for our amusement every personal peculiarity or ludicrous incident he can recall of his old friend's family. We trust the time has not—or will not—come, when Professor Wilson's household will share the same fate; for *he*, it appears, has taken the chief place in the Opium Eater's affections, *vice* Wordsworth deposed. Constantly is the new idol introduced to endorse an opinion; to repeat a sentiment; to back up his disciple. "*I think so—so does Professor Wilson,*" is several times repeated; and the reader finds it almost impossible not to yield at once to propositions so authoritatively enforced. Merely referring our readers to the "*Literary Reminiscences,*" vol. i. pp. 93, 273, 290, 291, 365, &c., we cannot resist one quotation (which has been repeated in the second volume of the English edition, p. 314), especially since it shows the strange familiarity with which the ladies of Wordsworth's family were treated in print by Mr. De Quincey, after his alienation from them.

"Farewell, Miss Wordsworth! *Farewell, impassioned Dorothy!*—I have not seen you for many a day—never shall see you again, perhaps! but shall attend your steps with tender thought so long as I hear of you living;—*so will Professor Wilson!*"

The reminiscences of Coleridge are, in many respects, the most interesting, and exhibit the most kindly fellow-feeling: Southey, too, is not hardly dealt with; and, we must acknowledge that, if in the narration of Charles Loyd's life there is much that had better have been omitted, there is much of very touching beauty. We shall never pass again over the old bridge that spans the river Brathey, without listening for the sound "like the sound of pealing anthems," which, caused by the action of the water upon

its rocky bed, is often heard (Mr. De Quincey tells us) upon calm summer evenings,—which he and Charles Loyd sat wondering at for hours, and which, now that one is gone, seems ever chanting to the survivor admonitions of passing time, and requiems over departed happiness.

We must now turn to the essays, which have at least one charm—the charm of variety. They treat on every subject under the sun, from the Roman Cæsars to the English Philosophers,—from the Essenes to Joan of Arc,—from “Murder considered as one of the Fine Arts,” to “Dinner, real and reputed.” They will all need, when republished in an English edition, the careful revision which, as magazine articles, they did not require, and, as American reprints, they of course could not obtain. Some will live with the choicest of the author’s writings, and some were not worth preserving beyond the month that gave them birth. With much that is characteristic and beautiful, there is often something of affectation and pedantry—attempts at wit, which, for the most part fail—and not unfrequently verbal conceits and exaggerated sentiment.

Before noticing the faults which now and then disfigure these essays, it is but fair to observe that they never destroy our admiration for the author’s general style. We have already spoken of one passage as among the best of its kind with which we are acquainted. There are several such in Mr. De Quincey’s writings. Whenever he warms with his subject, he pours out the most passionate and noble eloquence, but it is an eloquence which scarcely ever degenerates into rant or bombast. His choice of words is always abundant, and generally happy. His images are all well chosen, and he can always vary his tone with the variations of his theme. We know, moreover, of no other author who so thoroughly understands the *melody* of prose: his finest sentences seem to have a rhythmic flow; and prose writing in his hands rises almost into the dignity of a poem.

Take, for example, his description of the self-devotion of Joan of Arc:—

“Great was the throne of France even in those days, and great was he that sat upon it; but well Joanna knew that not the throne nor he that sat upon it was for *her*; but, on the contrary, that she was for *them*; not she by them, but they by her, should rise from the dust. Gorgeous were the lilies of France, and for centuries had the privilege to spread their beauty over land and sea, until, in another century, the wrath of God and man combined to wither them; but well Joanna knew, early at Domremi she had read that bitter truth, that the lilies of France would decorate no garland for *her*; flower nor bud, bell nor blossom, would ever bloom for *her*.”\*

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\* “Miscellaneous Essays,” p. 80.

And here, from the same volume, is another memorable passage. The author is telling a mother, whose son has fought at Talavera, all he *dare* tell of that dearly-bought victory. In how few words, yet how graphically, he sketches the undaunted courage of our English soldiers!—pray God, in the *coming* war, that courage be not so sorely tried!

“I showed her not the funeral banners under which the noble regiment was sleeping. I lifted not the overshadowing laurels from the bloody trench in which horse and rider lay mangled together. But I told her how these dear children of England, privates and officers, had leaped their horses over all obstacles as gaily as hunters to the morning’s chase. I told her how they rode their horses into the mists of death (saying to myself but not saying to her), and laid down their young lives for thee, O mother England! as willingly—poured out their noble blood as cheerfully—as ever, after a long day’s sport, when infants, they had rested their wearied heads upon their mother’s knees, or had sunk to sleep in her arms.”\*

When an author can write purely and gracefully as this, we are the more intolerant of such harsh phrases as—“to inosculate with,” “a letch,” “the circumjacencies of a mouth,” “to integrate an empire,” which becomes “orbicular as the disk of a planet,” “the schematism of an idea,”—and fifty other expressions equally strange.† This use of a hybrid English, and the still more frequent use of Latin, Greek, or merely technical, words, is of no material importance in the lighter and ephemeral essays; but when this pedantry occurs in those intended to be generally read and to instruct, it is absurd to the last degree, for the aim of the essay is sacrificed to the display of illustrative learning which it contains. Among the cleverest, and in some respects the most valuable, of the essays, is one on the “Logic of Political Economy,” which was published separately, and which has elicited the praise of John Stuart Mill for its definitions of “value.” In the preface to this essay (for though of some size we must class it among the essays), Mr. De Quincey, whose object, we suppose, was not to render the difficult subject on which he treated *more* obscure than it is, and who, in the case of another, would inveigh against (to use his own phrase) “explaining an ignotum per ignotius,” thus writes:—

“It is a metaphysical impossibility that supply and demand, the relation of which is briefly expressed by the term ‘market value,’ could ever effect price, except by a *secondary* force. Always there must be a *modificabile* (*i.e.* an antecedent price arising from some other cause),

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\* “Miscellaneous Essays,” p. 162.

† There is one word of Mr. De Quincey’s coining which should certainly pass current; and our chief wonder is that it is not already in general circulation. It is “parvanimity,” “little mindedness,”—antipodal, of course, to the familiar “magnanimity.”

before any modification from supply against demand can take effect. Consequently, while 'natural price' (the contradiction of 'market price') is always a monomial price, founded on the relation of supply and demand, must always be a binomial."<sup>\*</sup>

We wonder what a Manchester man, curious in political economy, but ignorant of algebra, would make of this!

In another, and an opposite way, do these essays sometimes fall below the high standard by which we measure everything that Mr. De Quincey writes. It is when he attempts to be *jocose*.

Never was there any one with less humour, or, except in mere verbal matters, less faculty of wit. He has, it is true, a sense of the ridiculous: he has, at times, a sarcastic pungency, and at times an amusing quaintness. But that is all. Never is he so insufferably dull, and even vulgar, as when he lays himself out to play the *role* of jester. Who can laugh at fun like this?—

"I know writers who report the marvels of velocity, &c., in such a way that they become insults to yourself. It is obvious that in *their* way of insisting upon our earth's speed in her annual orbit, they do not seek to exalt *her*, but to mortify *you*. And, besides, these fellows are answerable for provoking people into fibs. For I remember one day that, reading a statement of this nature about how many things the earth had done that *we* could never hope to do, and about the number of cannon-balls, harnessed as a tandem, which the earth would fly past without leaving time to say 'How are you off for soap?' in vexation of heart, I could not help exclaiming, 'That's nothing: I've done a great deal more myself,' though, when one turns it in one's mind, you know there must be some inaccuracy there."<sup>†</sup>

In this same essay (for though *among* the narrative papers, this article on the "System of the Heavens," is not *of* them) is an example of the exaggerations into which the author's imagination leads him. There is, as every one knows, a nebula of considerable size in the constellation of Orion. For many years astronomers had in vain endeavoured to resolve it; and some professed to believe that it was indeed no congeries of stars at all, but, as the sceptical expression ran,—"the crude matter from which Nature formed fresh worlds." Thanks to Lord Rosse, the question of its resolution into stars has at length been settled, and of course the peculiar romance about it has altogether vanished.

Mr. De Quincey, however, does not neglect this once famous, but now somewhat "passe," nebula, and discovers in its *form* wonders which more than compensate for its want of a mysterious *nature*. To everybody else the nebula of Orion, as laid down in map or picture, would seem only an irregular and shapeless cluster, with long streamers of light darting out in different directions:

<sup>\*</sup> "Logic of Political Economy," Preface, p. ix.

<sup>†</sup> "Narrative Papers," &c., vol. ii. p. 35.

but to the eye of our author, this innocent nebula is "an abominable apparition"—"a dreadful creature"—"a detestable phantom"—it "raises its face in the very anguish of hatred to some unknown heavens"—"brutalities unspeakable sit upon the upper lip"—while "the lower lip is a convolute of cruelty and revenge." These are but extracts from three long pages of what appears to us, at least, more worthy of one whom the moon has smitten than of one who gazes calmly upon the stars.

A review of each separate essay is of course impossible; we can but indicate those which seem to us most striking. "The Essenes," is an attempt to prove that the early Christians, shrinking from persecution, bound themselves into a secret society with secret signs, under the semblance of a pseudo-Jewish sect and that they, and they only, were the "Essenes" of whom Josephus speaks. In the essay on "Homer and the Homeridae," is much of curious and philosophic research; in those on the Cæsars and the Philosophers, not a little of writing no less forcible than full of interest. The lighter sketches on "Modern Superstitions," and on "Murder considered as one of the Fine Arts," are, perhaps still cleverer, and even more characteristic. The latter is as grotesquely weird as Retzsch's picture of the "Walpurgis' Night." The former contains, at least, two passages, which, once read will not lightly be forgotten;—one is a description of the phantoms which haunt the traveller in trackless deserts; the other of the strange voices which are heard by those who sail upon unknown seas.

Of Mr. De Quincey's narrative pieces, "Walladmor," though really original, was sent into the world as a translation of a German imitation of the Waverley Novels. This "umbræ imago" has now entirely vanished; and not even the zeal of American publishers has succeeded in rescuing it from the hand of time and the trunk-makers. "The Household Wreck" is an instance of how little one cares for the mere plot of a story, if the story itself be but powerfully and naturally told. Nothing can be more intrinsically absurd than this romantic tale; but we defy any one not to be affected by the deep feeling and *heart* which everywhere pervade it. We must leave our readers to make their own acquaintance with the historic sketch of "The Flight of the Tartar Tribe;" and the strange story—is this, too, *history*?—of the "Spanish Nun." Most sincerely do we congratulate them and the literary world at large, on this new edition of Mr. De Quincey's works. The publishers of the American reprint have laid us all under a heavy weight of gratitude for their appreciation and judgment in selecting these writings for republication; for the energy with which they have carried out their purpose; and lastly for the liberality with which they handed over to Mr. De Quincey

that proportion of the profits which he would have received from an original copyright work in England.

Had it not been for this Boston firm, we might never have had an English edition at all of Mr. De Quincey's writings, but might have been compelled to hunt them up from old shelves-full of Tait and Blackwood. This would have been a no inconsiderable loss, for, with all their faults,—and that (independent of their High Church and Tory tone, which of course some will like) they have very grievous faults, we have not hesitated to point out,—there are yet few volumes so abounding in lofty sentiment and depth of pathos, so rich in all the graces of style, so full of learning and of truth, as those which come from the pen of the "English Opium-Eater."

We must not conclude without a word of praise of the English edition. Mr. De Quincey has edited, and Messrs. Hogg, of Edinburgh, have published, these two volumes with much care and accuracy. Several valuable notes have been added; several obscurities cleared up; many blemishes swept away; and we cannot but augur well for the volumes which have still to be re-edited and re-printed from the completeness of those which are before us.

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#### ART. VIII.—THE BALANCE OF POWER IN EUROPE.

1. *Introduction to the History of the Nineteenth Century.* By G. G. Gervinus, Professor of History in the University of Heidelberg. Bohn, London, 1853.
2. *Vattel's Laws of Nations.* By J. Chitty, Esq. London, 1854.
3. *Communications respecting Turkey, made to Her Majesty's Government by the Emperor of Russia, with the Answers returned to them, January to April, 1853.* Presented to both Houses of Parliament, 1854.
4. *Memorandum by Count Nesselrode, June, 1844.* Presented to both Houses of Parliament.

THE separation of the territories of Europe into independent States, contrasted in moral and physical peculiarities, differing in power, co-ordinate in right, combined collaterally into a single system, by resident embassies, complicated treaties, and historical associations, and, with a single exception, united by a common religion, is one of the most striking phenomena of our modern civilization. Connected with these divisions is a certain mutual jealousy, which is popularly entitled a regard for the *Balance of*

*Power*; a principle which has been sometimes represented as the cause of innumerable and fruitless wars, and the source of infinite contention and bloodshed; and, at others, as the greatest and most beneficial discovery of modern civilization, affording to the weak protection against the encroachments of the strong, and, if not the invariable preventive of ambitious wars, yet their sure and speedy avenger.

Perhaps every great principle which influences national action, though it rises out of some urgent sense of right or necessity, is yet differently stated and differently understood among those who endeavour to theorize respecting it: hence, it has a better and a worse aspect, and may accordingly be approved or denounced. Not only so, but the same doctrine is alternately the justification of philanthropic virtue, and the cloak of pernicious ambition. To disentangle the true view, the ideal of right, which lies deep in the minds of good men, even when they perhaps state the principle inaccurately, is a sort of metaphysical problem, involving the difficulty inherent in all the larger moral generalizations.

The state of Europe has given to the doctrine of the Balance of Power at the present time a peculiar interest. We, therefore, propose to take a cursory review of its operation in modern Europe; to consider its influence at some of the greater epochs, and the modification of it which is needed for solving some of the problems of modern politics.

The purpose of the system founded on the Balance of Power, according to some of its prominent expounders, is to secure to every State the full possession and enjoyment of its rights, by making its safety and independence objects of interest and guardianship to all its neighbours. It endeavours to accomplish this end by vigilantly watching the foreign policy of surrounding nations, instantly checking the first encroachments of ambition, and, if necessary, by forming combinations to restrain or to punish any aggressor on the common rights. It does not profess to equalize the power of States,—a chimerical and impossible object,—but to sustain the existing distribution of territory, or, when that is impossible, to favour only such a new distribution as shall not make any one power too formidable. What is usually termed a Balance of Power, according to Gentz (a high authority on the subject), is, “that constitution, subsisting among neighbouring States more or less connected with one another, by virtue of which no one among them can injure the independence or essential rights of another without meeting with effectual resistance on some side, and consequently exposing itself to danger.\*” Although this principle was not altogether unknown in former periods of the world, it has never been system-

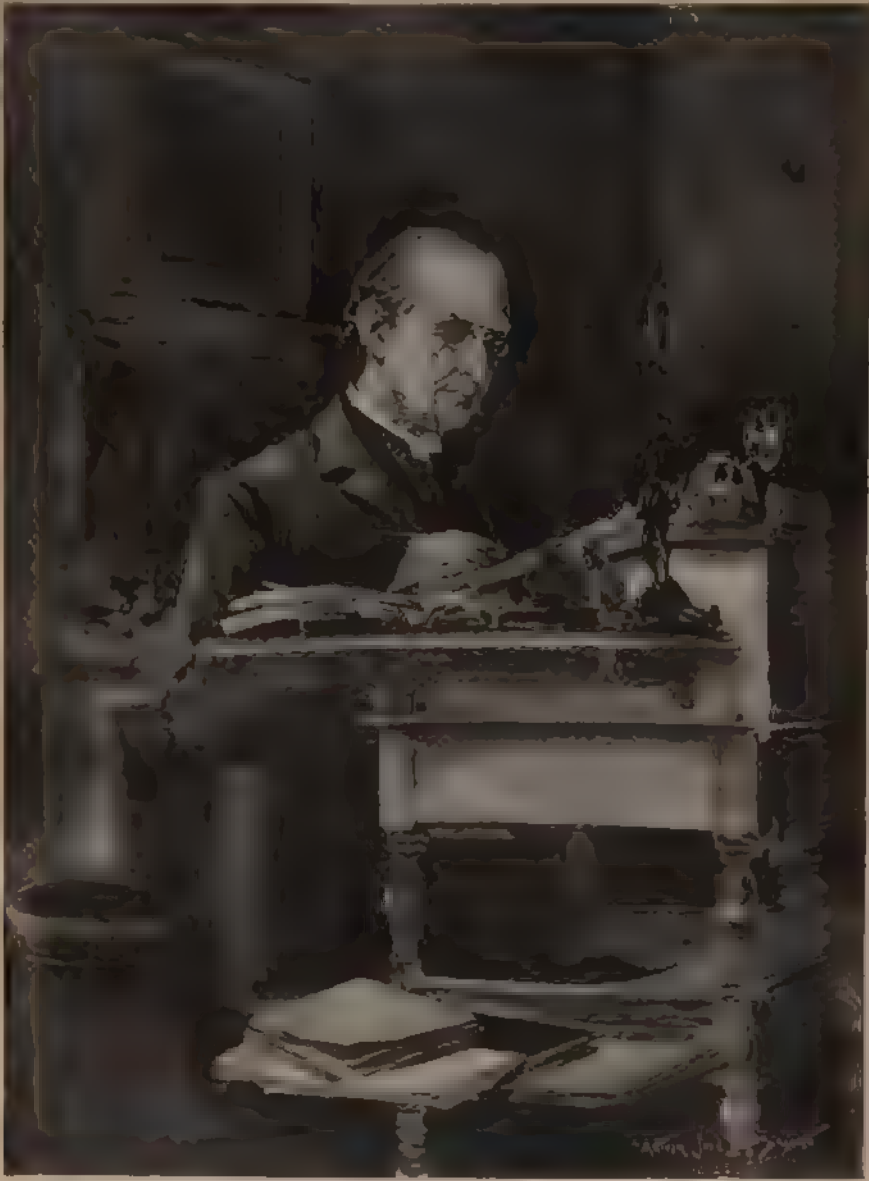
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\* “Fragments on the Political Balance.”









Frederic W. Farrar

Nov. 17. 1857

# McCLURE'S MAGAZINE.

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## ARCHDEACON FARRAR.

### A VISIT TO HIS HOME IN DEAN'S YARD.

BY ARTHUR WARREN.

Illustrated by Arthur Jule Goodman.

TWO men stood in the study window of a large, old-fashioned house in Dean's Yard, within the precincts of Westminster Abbey, and looked out upon the serene enclosure as it lay splashed with the rays of the falling sun. In the view they saw nothing to suggest the grim materialism of our dying century. The silent, serene spectacle evoked all the poetry of the past. The gray cathedral, thrusting its Gothic arches toward heaven; the spacious quiet of this Old-World corner; the black-ribbed trees, waving their crowns of London green; the distant, mellow chimes of bells; the nearness of the most precious shrine that ever was hallowed by time, by benediction, and by mortal greatness, stilled the crowding thoughts, and for an interval held the gazers dumb. They seemed to stand in the middle ages, watching the turbid stream of history flow over this hallowed spot, the dearest possession of the English-speaking race. Then, suddenly, there came a message from the present, and the two spectators turned from their pageant of visions. "Big Ben," on the Parliament tower yonder, was beating out another hour from the world's life.

"Mr. Archdeacon," said I, "do you ever feel that you are becoming accus-

tomed to this—this living in the very heart of English history, this nook of the planet which is the home-place of your countrymen and of their kith and kin? Surely it can never become a thing-of-course, a commonplace experience? These surroundings must be a constant inspiration to one who spends his life among them?"

"They make this great, grimy London worth living in," said Archdeacon Farrar, as he turned from the window and pulled a couple of big arm-chairs nearer to the light. He paused for a little in a kind of reverie. The spell of our day-dream was not broken. Consciousness does not always leave impressions where one found them. Somehow I fancied that the archdeacon's was a more virile personality than it had seemed to me when I had seen him yesterday in the pulpit at St. Margaret's. He appeared now taller than in the surplice, younger, deeper of voice, and of robuster frame. Perhaps through the ecclesiastic I was approaching nearer to the man. In the apartment where we sat there was no tinge of sacerdotalism. I recall at the moment nothing in the aspect of the place that suggested the calling of my host, except it were the literary side of him. The room is a writer's work-room, and

not the cell of a priest. And the man before me, save for his Anglican dress, suggested the poet rather than the preacher, though, doubtless, the line of our conversation had pitched this note in my mind. His hair is a little grayer and thinner than it was when we saw him in America, but he does not look his sixty-three years.

I fancied, too, there had been a deeper meaning in his answer than at first appeared. At any rate, I had heard him preach the day before on God, the Refuge from the troubles and disappointments of our common life. He dwelt then on the passing away of the hopes of youth. He said that among his hearers there was, probably, not a man or woman

who had covered half the allotted span of threescore years and ten without learning, in some measure, that nothing in human experience brings the pleasure we had promised ourselves; that success leaves its desires unfulfilled; and that applause does not necessarily yield happiness. What I specially recalled of that discourse was its insistence on the poverty of earthly rewards, and the security of the Refuge where the whips and scorns of time are unheeded, and where, while men without revile and persecute, misinterpret, misunderstand, and misrepresent our acts, our motives, and our



ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH. DOCT. R. FARRAR'S CHURCH, LONDON.

thoughts, there is yet One above who knows, who understands.

I have heard it said that he is a disappointed man, that he had hopes of greater preferment in the Church, and that these hopes have not been realized. But it is rather unfair to state the case in that way. If Archdeacon Farrar had cared greatly for the loaves and fishes of the Establishment, he would, it is reasonable to suppose, have conformed more closely to its customs, not to say its prejudices. The fact is, he has deliberately barred his own promotion. He has not coddled orthodoxy; he has been too liberal for the

## ARCHDEACON FARRAR.

powers that make appointments; and he has seen men of lesser light and leading thrust over his head into bishoprics. It would be strange if he did not feel a wound now and then. But if he has known disappointment, it is because he has been denied opportunity for the greater work which a higher position would have enabled him to perform, and not because honors and emoluments have been diverted from his course. He has passed his active Church life at what I may call the school of liberal Christianity—at Westminster Abbey—in touch with that most lovable of men, Dean Stanley, and in association with Stanley's broad-minded successor, Dean Bradley. The Westminster foundation is practically an independent Church, and the archdeacon has carried its influence to St. Margaret's. It is enough to say that Max Müller and Principal Tulloch have preached in the Abbey, that Charles Darwin's grave is there, and that when the archbishop visits the Abbey the dean is entitled to read a formal protest. Who would make a bishop out of an archdeacon who believed in, taught, and practised this damaging sweet reasonableness? Obviously not the ecclesiastical powers.

A clerical friend of mine who is at the opposite pole from the archdeacon in outward form, not inward sympathies, being a Ritualist of the most advanced type, said to me the other day: "I have the greatest respect for Farrar, but,

unfortunately for him, he is in advance of his time. We Britons, you know, love our prejudices, and the majority of my countrymen resent being asked to relinquish the thought that their dearest friends and neighbors are ever damned."

These thoughts were treading on another's heels when the archdeacon took up the broken thread of our talk.

"It is a privilege to live here, even here life is not all poetry; there is a good deal of strenuous work to be done. Even in a cathedral-close comes face to face with the tough problems of human life. We are shut away here from the noise of the world but not from the woes of it. For you know our Abbey is a religious centre as well as an historical one, and brings us into contact with all manner of life. And I have tried to reach out from St. Margaret's to all manner of men. The spirit of our teaching is Catholicity. I think I may fairly say that, though I am often rebuked by

my interpretation."

I put another question, hoping it was not too "personal" as the saying goes: "What are the special duties and privileges of an archdeacon?"

"The duties are not onerous and the position is of value chiefly because it gives me a seat in Convocation. It carries, too, the functions of a rural dean. As for the 'privileges,' as you call them, there are £13 a year."

The archdeacon smiled. "And for a Canonry, that merged in



MAIN ENTRANCE TO DEAN'S YARD

rectorship of St. Margaret's. My incumbency there carries with it a stall in our great cathedral, so that, for two months of the year, I am what they call 'canon in residence;' in other words, I preach in the Abbey during that time. Aside from that, my clerical work is, of course, at St. Margaret's Church."

"But are you, I wonder, like other English rectors? I mean, do you perform the usual parochial duties? If you do, then my wonder increases, because I do not see how you get time for the rest of your work. You are always writing when you are not preaching; at least, that is the notion we have of you in the world outside."

"A life of cloistered ease and dreams of books, I suppose?"

"Something of that kind."

"The conception is delightfully inaccurate. I am the rector of a large parish in which most of the residents are poor. There is not a case of sickness or trouble that I do not personally attend. The ordinary parochial visits are made by my three curates. Between us we know and see every one of our parishioners."

"Then your literary productivity is the more remarkable."

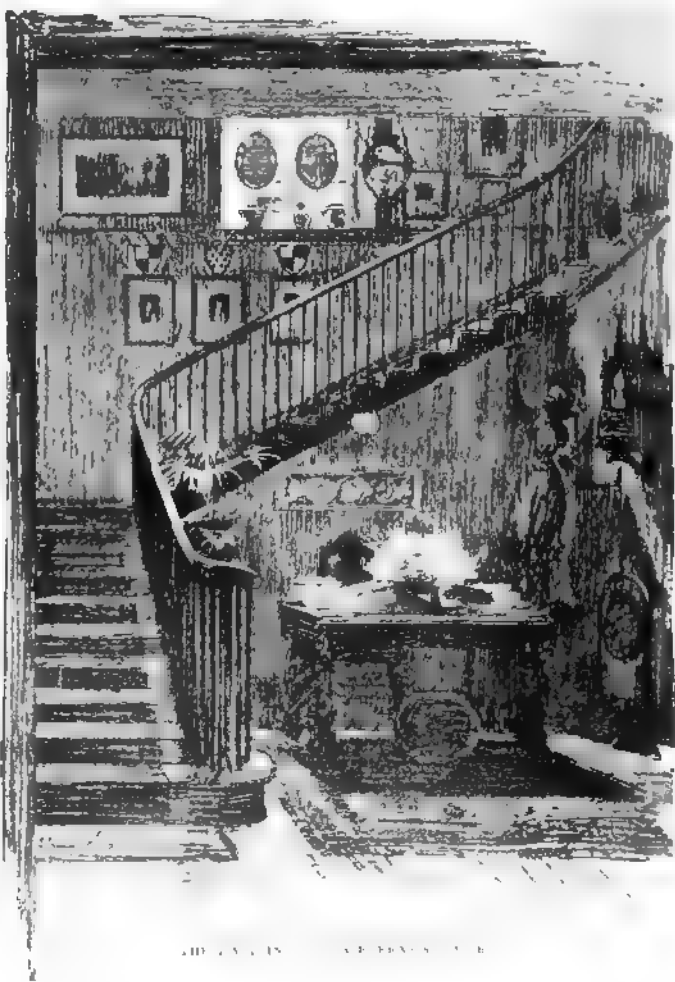
"Method has something to do with the amount of work a man may get through in a day."

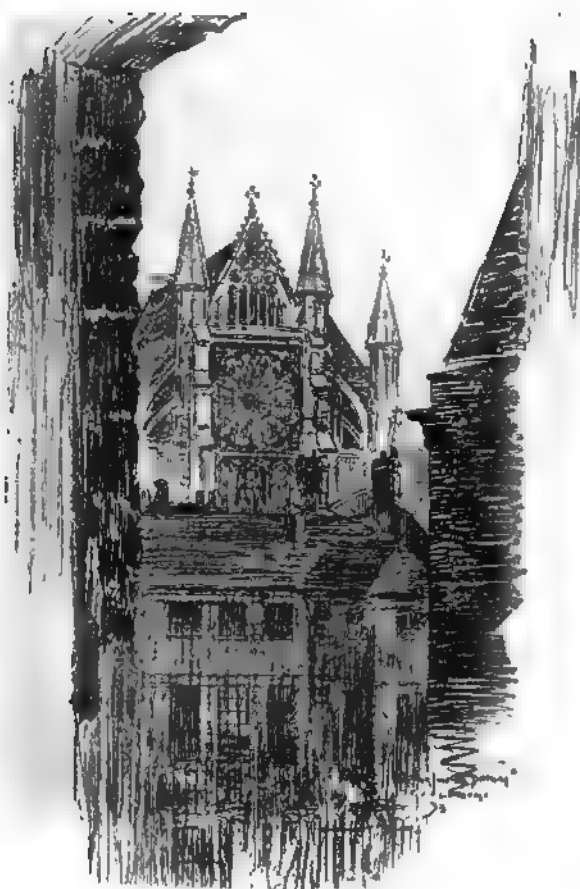
"I have heard so. As the most unmethodical man now living, I have no opinion on the subject."

"Well, I am at work at half-past eight in the morning. I have a large mail, as a rule, and when that is sifted and answered, I work at one thing or another till ten in the evening. I do a good part of my task at the Athenæum Club in the afternoon. But, of course, the chief part of it is done in this study, and at this tall desk by the window. You have probably noticed that I prefer to stand while writing. An hour or two before bed-time I devote to reading. Besides, of course, as Chaplain to the Speaker, I am bound to regular attendance at the House of Commons."

"Daily?"

"At three o'clock, excepting Saturdays."





THE ROSE WINDOW OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY FROM A HALL WINDOW OF DOCTOR FARRAR'S HOUSE.

tion the late Bishop of Massachusetts, and, while doing so, he left his chair and lifted from the wall a little frame which he placed in my hands. It held a photograph of Archdeacon Farrar and Bishop Brooks, taken in the latter's study in Boston.

"It is one of my dearest treasures," said Archdeacon Farrar. "I am proud to be associated with that great man, if only on a photographer's plate. How he uplifted us! I was told by one of your countrymen, not long ago, that, since Lincoln's death, America has sustained no loss so great as his. Bishop Brooks was often with us here in London. He came to the Abbey as if it were his home. I know of no man who so filled it, who seemed so truly to belong there, as if he were a part of it

His presence was an inspiration. There are many bishops: there was but one Phillips Brooks."

Then we fell to speaking of the American love for Westminster Abbey, and I said: "We Americans feel that we have a right there; a share in that splendid heritage. And with this feeling is one of gratitude to Dean Stanley, to Dean Bradley, and to yourself for having done more than any other men to bring this feeling home to us. I remember the Abbey services in memory of President Garfield, and of Lowell, when the Abbey was thrown open to Americans, and England stood beside us, doing honor to our dead. I, for one, can never forget the impressiveness of those scenes, nor of that other, when the memorial to Longfellow was unveiled in the Poet's Corner. And I have often asked myself, where, in all America, did we hold a national memorial service to John Bright? And if we had a national Walhalla that would stand to us as the Abbey stands to England,

would we, with one accord, have thrown it open to mourning Englishmen and have shared with them in commemorating Tennyson and Robert Browning?"

The archdeacon turned to his shelves, and presently brought down a scrapbook filled with pamphlets and other literary fragments, turning over the collection until he came to an article of his own, printed in an English review five years ago. The paper was entitled: "The Future of Westminster Abbey," and from it he read me this passage:

"I would fain ask it of the whole English and American people - *What is to be the future of Westminster Abbey?* I say of the American people as well as of the English, for America, too, has a



VIEW FROM AN UPPER WINDOW OF THE OLD PARSONS STREET

share, and a large one, in our national mausoleum. One great purpose that the building and its history may serve, is to bind the two nations—which are yet one nation—in closer union. Such questions as ‘fishery disputes’ ought very rapidly to burn themselves out, when Englishmen and Americans worship side by side in the Abbey, and remember that all its glories and memories up till the days of the Pilgrim Fathers, nay, up to the War of Independence, belong equally to both. ‘In signing away his own empire, George II. did not sign away the empire of English law, of English literature, of English blood, of English religion, or of the English tongue.’ Elsewhere I have shown more fully the share of Americans in Westminster Abbey. It contains the bust of their most beloved poet. It is enriched by their gifts. It is the first object of their pilgrimage. They feel, rightly and proudly, that it is theirs as well as ours. Therefore, I ask Americans and Englishmen what shall be the future of a building which has been equally ‘a seat of royalty and a cradle of freedom’?”

“What is your own answer to the question, Mr. Archdeacon?”

“I give no answer, but I will say, that the stream of English history which has flowed through the grand old Abbey for many centuries, leaving its memorials there, is likely to cease with the Victorian era.”

“Why?”

“There is hardly room for another memorial, there is hardly space for another grave. England’s great dead must henceforth find sepulture elsewhere, unless the Abbey is enlarged by the addition of a chapel or other suitable building. The matter has been much discussed, but nothing has been done.”

“I take it that the eternal problem of finance has yet to be solved.”

“If you put it in that way, yes.”

“But where is the public spirit of England? You English raise money enough at a pinch, and at times even without pinching. The sinking of the battleship ‘Victoria’ was followed by an immediate subscription of a quarter of a million sterling, I am told. Sure-

ly your countrymen will not permit the glorious record of Westminster Abbey to stop at the twentieth century? They will not suffer their descendants to look vainly through the Abbey, as you suggest, for any traces of the thoughts, emotions, discoveries, arts, religion of the generations which succeed the reign of Queen Victoria? This is not a parochial theme, nor merely a London one; it is imperial, nay world-wide, in its interest. The project appeals to the loftiest sentiment of man. There is not an American worthy the name who would not subscribe to it. It is impossible to suppose that England will long remain callous to Westminster’s claim upon her.”

“England has yet to put her hand in her pocket for the Abbey’s sake. The Chapter is poor. We have had to suppress a canonry, and to borrow, to *borrow* mind you, sixty thousand pounds from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, in order to carry out the slow repairs now in progress, and prevent the Abbey from crumbling to pieces.”

I happened to mention to the archdeacon that I had stood just behind him when Darwin’s coffin was lowered to the grave in the north aisle of the Abbey. I had then newly come to England. That occasion was my first experience in Westminster, and, in the eager fashion of youth, I had given myself to a kind of riot of the imagination, under the solemn influences of the hour. When the Garfield service was held I sat in the Poet’s Corner, and I remember seeing a gleam of brass at my feet. It was the inscription on Macaulay’s gravestone, and I thought how the master of language would have described the impressive scene. I was in England again when Browning died, and I stood at his grave that foggy winter afternoon when he was laid to rest beside Chaucer and John Dryden. I did not see Tennyson’s funeral, but when the Laureate died at Aldworth I was staying within a stone’s throw of his winter home at Farringford, in the Isle of Wight.

“I knew Browning and Tennyson intimately,” said the archdeacon.

“And Macaulay?”



A VIEW OF VIENNA 1866

"I met him once, not long before he died. It was at the house of his nephew, my old friend Sir George Trevelyan. I sat next to Macaulay at dinner, and listened in a kind of enchantment through the conversation which he had led for an entire evening. There was an undertone of sadness, and his health was failing; but I can never forget the charm of his discourse, nor the simple ease with which he drew upon his marvellous stores of knowledge.

"I was much in contact with Tennyson during many years—forty years, as I remember—for I was a young man when I first came to know him through his kind interest in a book I had written, and in which I had dwelt on the fact of his surpassing all other poets in 'making the sound an echo to the sense.' My most delightful recollections of him concern the many times when he read his poems to me, sometimes, too, before he had given them to the world. This was a great privilege. I remember that in one of our conversations I told him the story of St. Telemachus: how that Eastern saint and hermit leaped down between the swords of the gladiators and lost his life, and how his noble act of self-devotion aroused the Christian world.

Tennyson was deeply impressed with the story. He said he would make it the subject of a poem. 'But,' he added eagerly, 'do not tell my intention to anyone.' He was always averse to letting the world know what he was working on. He wrote the poem on Telemachus, as you know. I embodied my recollections of Tennyson in a series of articles signed 'Nemo.' They were published in England early in the months of 1893. In the Poet's Corner there will be, ere long, a bust of the Laureate, by Woolner."

Speaking again of the Abbey, I said

that its neighbor, St. Margaret's Church, seemed to me, with all deference to its rector, a misplaced structure. It hides Henry the Seventh's beautiful chapel, and it suffers in contrast with the superb cathedral. Some parochially-



ENTRANCE TO DEAN'S YARD THROUGH THE CLOISTER OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

minded persons of the Georgian days were probably responsible for putting the church where it is, and blocking the view.

"Oh, no!" exclaimed the archdeacon. "You have fallen into a very common error. St. Margaret's is an old church. Indeed, our parish is the mother-parish of West London. All the parishes west of Temple Bar have been carved out of it, at one time or another. There has been a church on the site of the present edifice from almost the earliest days of the Abbey; for in the monastic time the Abbey

place that later on belonged to General Monk. One hundred and fifty years ago, or thereabouts, the window was presented to our church by public subscription.

"Then there is the memorial to Caxton. If you have a turn for antiquity you will remember that Caxton set up his printing press within the precincts of the Abbey, and that within a very few yards from where we are now sitting the first English book was printed in this country. Caxton was buried in the church, and a lovely window has been placed there by the London printers. For this window Tennyson wrote the following lines; perhaps you would like to see the originals:

*First line!*

*Thy prayer was 'light, more light, while Time shall last!  
Thou sawest a glory glowing on the night,  
But not the shadow which that light would cast,  
Till shadow vanish in the light of light*

*of Tennyson*

"Lowell, and Lewis Morris, my old school friend Sir Edwin Arnold, and Robert Browning have also written lines for windows in St. Margaret's. Here are Lowell's lines on the Sir Walter Raleigh window:

*Inscribed for the Raleigh  
Memorial Window in St Margaret's*

*Thou hast lived, thou art, from England's breast to these  
Such truth as his remember where to come;  
Proud of his past wherefrom our future grows,  
This window to inscribe with Raleigh's fame.*

*Edmund*

"The Raleigh window was presented to us by Americans. I once happened

to mention that Raleigh lay buried in St. Margaret's, but that there was no memorial to him in the church. Very soon after that the Americans provided this beautiful window. You Americans are not only liberal, but you give twice in giving quickly. I am proud to say that your countrymen take an increasing interest in St. Margaret's as a church. If it were not for being overshadowed by the Abbey, the historical interest of the place would be even more highly regarded than it is now."

"Has not your church some sort of official connection, if the phrase is permissible, with the House of Commons?"

"It has been for centuries the church of that House, but the fact, or, at any rate, the custom attaching to the fact, was very nearly forgotten by the time I became rector. I hope that I have done something to revive the old rela-

tion. There are now several pews reserved solely for members of the House. You may recollect that at the time of the Queen's Jubilee the House of Commons attended a special commemoration service at St. Margaret's.

The Speaker came in his wig and gown, with his mace borne before him; the late Mr. W. H. Smith, then leader of the House, and Mr. Gladstone, then leader of the Opposition, attended with their followers; and there were present all the officers of the House and two ex-Speakers. That was for me a mem-

orable occasion. It was by way of recognizing the traditional connection

W. Childs. Speaking of journalism, I may tell you that in St. Margaret's is buried the Englishman to whom, perhaps more than to any other, Britons owe the establishment of the penny press. Edward Lloyd, father of the famous tenor, established the 'Daily Chronicle,' the organ of modern English liberalism, and he fought many years against the oppressive stamp duties which retarded the growth of journalism in Great Britain. He died three years ago, and a window to his memory was placed in St. Margaret's, bearing these lines by Sir Edwin Arnold:

*A Master. Printer of the Press. He spoken  
By mouth of many thousand tongues; he sung,  
The pens which break the Scriptures. Good Lord! make  
Thy strong ones faithful, and Thy bold, afraid!*

March 27. 1891.

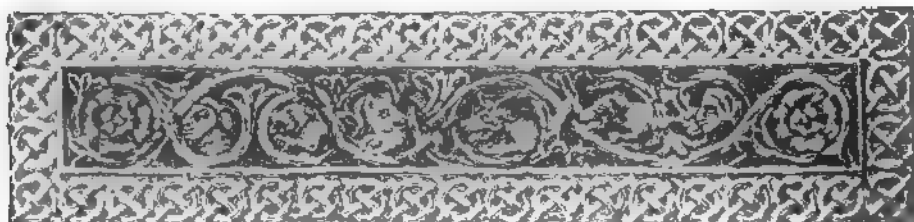
Edwin Arnold

We talked a while on the active work of my host, on his views of church polity, and particularly on the relation of the Church of England to the masses of the English people. I was much impressed with the broadness of this Broad Churchman's mind. He spoke as one of the most tolerant of men, and as one whose aim is to do what little a man may to leave human life brighter and better than he found it. That aim, he would say, is what makes life worth

living. He will, to this end, join hands with any worker, no matter how widely their professional formulas may differ. I have seen him on the same platform with Cardinal Manning, pleading for temperance, and speaking against the persecution of the Jews; I heard him from his own pulpit pronounce a eulogy on Cardinal Newman; and he was, I believe, the first Churchman to speak in behalf of "General" Booth's plan for the succor of "Darkest England." When one has talked much with him, one must be convinced that, behind the archdeacon's gentle manner and silvery voice and sensitive face, there is

a determined nature that will strike for the right at any hazard. That was my feeling as I left him. He came with me to the door, and wished me good speed on the long journey I was about to undertake. I passed again through Dean's Yard, and thought how like it

is to some old College "Quad" at Oxford or Cambridge. It is, indeed, the only thing of the kind that London has to show. You can see the footprints of the centuries in these precincts. But "Big Ben" was clanging again as I went through the archway. It was like passing into another world as I got upon the bustling modern thoroughfare, for even here, within the shadows of the Abbey, "the old order changeth, yielding place to new."







Rheal Hall



“‘Faith he’s the boy that knows how to make a Judy of himself, any way, Pether,’ exclaimed another. ‘The devil a hapurth asier nor to give these Quality the bag to hould, so there isn’t, — an’ they think themselves so cute, too!’”

“‘Augh!’ said a third, ‘couldn’t a man find the soft side of them, asy as make out the way to his own nose without bein’ led to it. Devil a sin it is to do them any way. Sure he thinks we wor tooth an’ nail at the meadow all day; an’ me thought I’d never recover it, to see Pether here, — the rise he tuck out of him! Ha, ha, ha, — och, och, — murder, oh?’”

“‘Faith,’ exclaimed Connor, ‘t was good, you see, to help the poor scholar; only for it we couldn’t get shkamin’ the half crown out of him. I think we ought to give the crathur half of it, an’ him so sick, — he will be wantin’ it worse nor ourselves.’”

“‘Oh, be Gorra, he’s fairly entitled to that. I vote him fifteen pince.’”

“‘Surely!’ they exclaimed unanimously, — ‘tunder-an’-turf, wasn’t he the manes of gettin’ it for us?’”

“‘Jemmy, a bouchal,’ said Connor, across the ditch to M’Evoy, ‘are you sleepin’?’”

“‘Sleepin’! Oh no,’ replied Jemmy, ‘I’d give the wide world for one wink of asy sleep.’”

“‘Well, aroon, here’s fifteen pince for you, that we shkam, — will I tell him how we got it?’”

“‘No don’t,’ replied his neighbours; ‘the boy’s given to devotion, an’, maybe, might scruple to take it.’”

“‘Here’s fifteen pince, avourneen, on the shovel, that we’re givin’ you for God’s sake. If you over\* this, won’t you offer up a prayer for us? Won’t you, avick?’”

“‘I can never forget your kindness,’ replied Jemmy; ‘I will always pray for you, an’ may God for ever bless you an’ yours.’”

“‘Poor crathur! May the heavens above have posthration on him. Upon my sowl, it’s good to have his blessin’ an’ his prayer. Now don’t fret, Jemmy; we’re lavin’ you wid a lot of neighbours here. They’ll watch you time about, so that whin you want any thing, call, avourneen, an there’ll still be some one here to answer. God bless you, an’ restore you, till we come wid the milk we’ll stale for you wid the help o’ God. Bad cess to me, but it ’ud be a mortal sin, so it would, to let the poor boy die without help. For, as the Catechiz says, ‘There is but one Faith, one Church, and one Baptism!’ Well, the readin’ that’s in that Catechiz is mighty improvin’, glory be to God!’”

With this nursing, the *Poor Scholar* recovers; but in the meanwhile, his nurse-tenders undergo a cross examination, out of which they extricate themselves handsomely. Two gentlemen in black are riding past the hospital ditch, who thus interrogate Connor: —

“‘How did you provide him with drink at such a distance from any human habitation?’”

“‘Throth, hard enough we found it, Sir, to do that same; but sure, whether or not, my Lord, we couldn’t be such nagers as to let him die all out, for wint o’ somethin’ to moisten his throat wid.’”

“‘I hope,’ inquired the other, ‘you had nothing to do in the milk-stealing which has produced such an outcry in this immediate neighbourhood?’”

“‘Milk-stalin’! Oh, bedad, Sir, there never was the likes known afore

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\* That is, to get over, to survive.

in the counthry. The Lord forgive them that did it! Be Gorra, Sir, the wickedness o' the people's mighty improvin', if one 'ud take warnin' by it, glory be to God!

"Many of the farmers' cows have been milked at night, Connor, — perfectly drained, — even my own cows have not escaped; and we who have suffered are certainly determined, if possible, to ascertain those who have committed the theft. I, for my part, have gone even beyond my ability in relieving the wants of the poor, during this period of sickness and famine; I therefore deserved this the less."

"By the powdher, your honor, if any gintleman deserves to have his cows *unmilked*, it's yourself. But, as I said this minute, there's no end to the wickedness o' the people, so there's not, although the Catechiz is against them, — for, says it, 'There is but one Faith, one Church, an' one Baptism.' Now, Sir, isn't it quare that people, wid such words in the book afore them, won't be guided by it? I suppose they thought it only a *white* sin, Sir, to take the milk, the thieves o' the world."

"Maybe, your honor," said another, "that it was only to keep the life in some poor sick crathur that wanted it more nor you or the farmers, that they did it. There's some o' the same farmers deserve worse, for they're keepin' up the prices o' their male an' praties upon the poor, an' did so all along, that they might make money by our distitution."

"That is no justification for theft," observed the graver of the two. "Does any one among you suspect those who committed it in this instance? If you do, I command you, as your Bishop, to mention them."

"How, for instance," added the other, "were you able to supply this sick boy with whey during his illness?"

"O thin, gintlemen," replied Connor, "bit it's a mighty improvin' thing to see our own Bishop, — God spare his Lordship to us! — an' the Protestant minister o' the parish joinin' together to relieve an' give good advice to the poor! Bedad, it's settin' a fine example, so it is, to the Quality, if they'd take pATTERN by it."

The length of our account of this collection of national tales, manifests the esteem in which we hold their general purpose, and our admiration of the talent and happy humor in which that excellent object is accomplished. In no portraiture of Irish character and manners have we met greater fidelity, or more trustworthy resemblance.

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[Compiled.]

ART. V. — *The Works of Robert Hall, A. M. With a brief Memoir of his Life by DR. GREGORY, and Observations on his Character as a Preacher, by JOHN FOSTER.* Edited by DR. OLYNTHUS GREGORY. 6 vols. 8vo. London. 1832.\*

WE have four reviews lying before us of the Works and Life of Robert Hall, with neither of which we think the generality of our readers would be particularly gratified. The earliest appeared in the ninety-fifth number of "The Quarterly Review." A main object of the writer is to show that Hall's later opinions and feelings were

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\* Republished in 3 vols. 8vo, by J. & J. Harper, New York.

inconsistent with such as he had previously expressed; and to exhibit his character as that of a very able, but, often, rash and intemperate writer, who was suffering from his position in society among the Dissenters; — "the Dissenters," as the writer says, half in irony and half in simplicity, "enjoying the liberty of thinking for themselves on every occasion." "His mind," it is affirmed, "wanted consolidating; had it been subjected to the wholesome restraint of liberal, but not lax, formularies, it would have been more true to itself." What, however, are considered as his more loyal, antirevolutionary, and Orthodox publications are dwelt upon with high praise.

The next article appeared in the number of "The Christian Observer" for February. This work is in the hands of the Evangelical party in the Church. The review of Hall is the production of a narrow-minded writer, full of the prejudices of his Church and sect, but who speaks of "the works of Hall" as "the *Impress*," — his own word, — "of that powerful, elegant, and devout mind, which, for so many years, stood at the highest elevation of intellectual fame, and gave force to the most sacred strains of piety, clothed in the richest garb of more than classical elegance."

All parties in England, in religion and politics, at least the more extreme parties, seem to find something congenial to their taste in the writings of Hall; a strong proof, perhaps, of his talents, but at the same time, it would seem, a proof of his inconsistency. Accordingly, in the twelfth number of "Tait's Edinburgh Magazine," a radical journal, there is another article upon him, full of eulogy mixed with censure, in which he is exhibited as the free-thinker, and sturdy and ultra oppositionist; and his celebrated Sermon on "Modern Infidelity" is treated as an "aberration," "in many essential points at variance both with the previous and the later recorded opinions of the author"; though admitted to be "powerful, useful, and highly eloquent."

We close our list of articles upon Hall with one in "The Eclectic Review" for March. In this publication, which is the organ of the Orthodox Dissenters, and which, at some periods, has contained articles of great ability, Hall was at one time a writer. He is spoken of with the warm interest in his character which might be expected, and the reviews in "The Quarterly" and "Christian Observer," are animadverted upon with severity.\*

No one, however, of the articles we have mentioned is composed with more than a very moderate share of ability. No one contains any thing like a philosophical estimate of Hall, as a man or a writer. This defect we shall not attempt to supply. We may however observe, that he appears to us as one of the most eloquent of those who in modern times have excelled in an inferior sort of

\* Since writing the above paragraph, we have seen another long review of Hall's *Life and Works* in "The British Critic, No. 24." This work is the organ of the High-Church party. The praise of Hall is liberal, accompanied with such censure, as might be expected, of his earlier productions.

eloquence. He is a fine party writer, expressing in a bold, rhetorical style opinions already held by many. There is nothing in his writings, as far as we are acquainted with them, which indicates calm, philosophical, or original thought; but the strength of his feelings gives new force to ideas in themselves common. Our minds are not put in action by any new views which he discloses, but his reader may be gratified by finding his own sentiments so forcibly, or at least so vehemently urged. His style is of a secondary order. He professed to be an admirer of the Saxon portion of our language in distinction from that of Latin origin. But little of this love of it appears in his works. His own language is declamatory, his expressions being often for the ear more than for the mind. His thoughts are not presented with a well-defined outline. The nicer shades of meaning are overlaid with words. But he was adapted to be a highly popular pleader on one side of a question, with whom a reader might go along with much satisfaction, so far as he found him defending his own opinions.

Of his life we shall now give a sketch from the articles before us, omitting in great part the expressions of party feeling that abound in them.

\* "Robert Hall was born at Arnsby, near Leicester, on the 2d of May, 1764. His excellent father was the Baptist minister of that village, and his name is well known as the Author of a valuable little work entitled, 'Helps to Zion's Travellers,' which has passed through several editions, and sufficiently attests his correct judgment and solid piety. He died in the year 1791. Robert, though named after his father, was the youngest of fourteen children; and while an infant, he was so delicate and feeble, that it was not expected he would reach maturity. Until he was two years of age, he could neither walk nor talk; and he was taught to speak and to spell at the same time, by an intelligent nurse, who, observing that his attention was attracted to the inscriptions on the grave-stones of a burial-ground adjacent to his father's house, adopted this singular expedient of tuition. No sooner was his tongue thus loosed, than his advance was marked. He became a rapid talker and an incessant questioner; and under the village dame, his thirst for knowledge soon manifested itself in his passion for books. In the summer season, after school hours were over, he would put his richly prized library (including an Entick's Dictionary) into his pinafore, and steal into his first school-room, the burial-ground, where, extended on the grass with his books spread around him, he would remain till the shades of evening compelled him to retire into the house. To this practice, we may trace with too great probability, the origin of that disease which rendered his whole life a conflict with physical suffering. When only six years of age, he was placed as a day scholar under the charge of a Mr. Simmons, who resided four miles from Arnsby;

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\* From "The Eclectic Review."

and at first he walked to school in the morning, and back in the evening. But the severe pain in his back, from which he suffered through life, had even then begun to distress him, and to render him incapable of the fatigue of walking so far. He was often obliged to lie down on the road; sometimes, his brother or one of his school-fellows would carry him. At length, on his father ascertaining the state of the case, Robert and his brother were placed under the care of a friend in the village, spending the Sunday only at home. The seat of Mr. Hall's disease was the aorta and the kidney on the right side; and nothing, we apprehend, could be more likely to give rise to it, than rheumatic affections occasioned by his lying on the rank grass of a burial-ground. The only wonder is that, with his feeble constitution, he survived.

"On starting from home on the Monday morning, Robert was in the practice of taking with him two or three books from his father's library, to read in the interval between school hours. His choice of books at this early age, was most extraordinary. The works of Jonathan Edwards were among his favorites; and before he was nine years old, he had perused, and re-perused, with intense interest, the treatises of that acute reasoner upon the 'Religious Affections,' and the 'Freedom of the Will,' as also Bishop Butler's 'Analogy.' His early predilection for this class of studies was in great measure determined and fostered by intimate association, in mere childhood, with a member of his father's congregation, a tailor by trade, but a very shrewd, well-informed man, and 'an acute metaphysician.' Before he was ten years old, our young student had written many essays on religious subjects, and had occasionally invited his brothers and sisters to hear his first attempts at preaching: and when he was only eleven, a friend, at whose house he was spending a few weeks for the benefit of a change of air, astonished at his precocity of talent, was so indiscreet as to request him to perform, more than once, before a select auditory, invited to hear the boy-preacher! 'I never call the circumstance to mind,' Mr. Hall has been heard to say, 'but with grief at the vanity inspired; nor, when I think of such mistakes of good men, am I inclined to question the correctness of Baxter's language, strong as it is, where he says: "Nor should men turn preachers as the river Nilus breeds frogs (saith Herodotus), when one half *moveth* before the other is *made*, and while it is yet but plain mud." We have known instances of similar injudiciousness in cases of similar precocity, so far as the gift of fluent speech was concerned in the display; but nothing can be more equivocal than the promise afforded by such early efflorescence. The native vigor and genuine superiority of the mental constitution are tested by the manner in which it comes out of the fever of juvenile vanity, and gradually recovers a healthful tone. In some, the intellectual growth is stunted for life, and vanity becomes the chronic disease of the character. In the few, the temporary self-elation operates as a beneficial stimulant, and sobers down into a proper self-confidence.

“When young Robert was about eleven, Mr. Simmons conscientiously informed the father, that he was unable to keep pace with his pupil, declaring, that he had often been obliged to sit up all night, to prepare the lessons for the morning; a practice he felt unable to continue! He was in consequence of this candid intimation removed, and was next placed, as a boarder, at the school of the Rev. John Ryland of Northampton, a man whose excellencies and eccentricities were strangely balanced. There he remained for little more than a year and a half, during which he made considerable progress in Latin and Greek; and after passing some time at home, in the study of divinity and some collateral subjects, under the immediate guidance of his father, was, in Oct. 1778, placed at the Bristol academy, with a view to his being prepared for the ministerial office among the Baptists, being then in his fifteenth year. In that institution, as in others of a similar nature, the divinity students are appointed in turn to deliver an address or discourse upon subjects selected by the president. Mr. Hall's first essay in this exercise proved an humiliating failure, which, if avocations so unlike may be compared, reminds us of young Nelson's failure of courage in the first engagement. ‘After proceeding for a short time, much to the gratification of his auditory, he suddenly paused, covered his face with his hands, exclaiming, “Oh! I have lost all my ideas,” and sat down, his hands still hiding his face. A second attempt, in the following week, was attended by a similar failure of self-possession or recollection, still more painful to witness, and still more humiliating. The effect upon his own mind seems to have been that of salutary mortification, while his tutors appreciated his talents too justly, to entertain any doubt of his ability and future success. Not long after, he delivered a discourse in a village pulpit, in the presence of several ministers, which excited the deepest interest.

“The summer vacation of 1780 was passed by young Hall under his father's roof, who, having now become fully satisfied of his son's genuine piety, as well as of his qualifications for the office to which his paternal hopes had always devoted him, expressed to many friends, a desire that he should be ‘set apart to the sacred work.’ Agreeably to his views of popular ordination, he resolved that the church of which he was pastor, should judge of his son's fitness for the sacred function, and recognise their conviction by a solemn act.

“‘Accordingly,’ as the following extract from the *Church-book* testifies, on the 13th of August, 1780, ‘he was examined by his father before the church, respecting his inclination, motives, and end in reference to the ministry, and was likewise desired to make a declaration of his religious sentiments. All which being done to the entire satisfaction of the church, they therefore set him apart, by lifting up their right hands, and by solemn prayer. His father then delivered a discourse to him, from 2 Tim. ii. 1. *Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.* Being thus sent forth, he preached in the afternoon from 2 Thes. i. 7, 8. *May the Lord bless him, and grant him great success!*’”—p. 9.

"He was still a student at the Bristol academy, to which he returned at the close of the vacation: and in the autumn of 1781, he was sent to Aberdeen, to complete his theological education at King's College, on Dr. Ward's foundation. The object of the appeal to the church, and the bearing of its decision, related to the expediency of his prosecuting his studies with a view to his becoming a minister of the gospel. Dr. Gregory does not employ the word ordination in mentioning this 'public designation' of Mr. Hall as a preacher, nor should we contend for the propriety of using that term in such a reference; since ordination is generally understood as an appointment to a specific charge. But, dismissing that word from consideration, with all the polemical associations that it suggests, we would ask, what was there in the proceeding here narrated, that could have any tendency to inflate the mind of a pious youth with self-importance, or that could be deemed, in any respect, offensive, injudicious, or 'perilous'?

"Mr. Hall entered King's College in the beginning of November, 1781. His first year was spent principally under the tuition of Professor Leslie, in the study of the Greek language; his second, third, and fourth years, under Professor Macleod, in the study of mathematics, natural philosophy, and moral philosophy. Here it was that he first became acquainted with his eminent friend Mackintosh; and some interesting particulars of their friendship and joint studies have been gathered by his Biographer from Sir James himself.

"When these two eminent men first became acquainted, Sir James was in his eighteenth year, Mr. Hall about a year older. Sir James described Mr. Hall, as attracting notice by a most ingenuous and intelligent countenance, by the liveliness of his manner, and by such indications of mental activity as could not be misinterpreted. His appearance was that of health, yet not of robust health; and he often suffered from paroxysms of pain, during which he would roll about on the carpet, in the utmost agony; but no sooner had the pain subsided than he would resume his part in conversation with as much cheerfulness and vivacity as before he had been thus interrupted. Sir James said he became attached to Mr. Hall, "because he could not help it." There wanted many of the supposed constituents of friendship. Their tastes, at the commencement of their intercourse, were widely different; and upon most of the important topics of inquiry, there was no congeniality of sentiment: yet notwithstanding this, the *sympathia* of their minds seemed of the same cast, and upon this, Sir James thought, the edifice of their mutual regard first rested. Yet he, ere long, became fascinated by his brilliancy and acumen, in love with his *cordiality* and ardor, and "awestruck" (I think that was the term employed by the transparency of his conduct and the purity of his principles. They read together; they sat together at lecture, if possible; they walked together. In their joint studies, they read much of Xenophon, and Herodotus, and more of Plato; and so well was all this known, exciting admiration in some, in others envy, that it was not unusual, as they went along, for their class-fellows to point at them and say, "*There go Plato and Herodotus.*" But the arena in which they met most frequently was that of morals and metaphysics; furnishing topics of incessant disputation. After having sharpened their weapons by reading, they often repaired to the

spacious sands upon the sea-shore, and still more frequently to the picturesque scenery on the banks of the Don, above the old town, to discuss with eagerness the various subjects to which their attention had been directed. There was scarcely an important position in Berkeley's Minute Philosopher, in Butler's Analogy, or in Edwards on the Will, over which they had not thus debated with the utmost intensity. Night after night, nay, month after month, for two sessions, they met only to study or to dispute; yet no unkindly feeling ensued. The process seemed rather, like blows in that of welding iron, to knit them closer together. Sir James said, that his companion as well as himself often contended for victory, yet never, so far as he could then judge, did either make a voluntary sacrifice of truth, or stoop to draw to and fro the *serra lycopodium*, as is too often the case with ordinary controvertists. From these discussions, and from subsequent meditation upon them, Sir James learnt more *as to principles*, (such, at least, he assured me, was his deliberate conviction) than from all the books he ever read. On the other hand, Mr. Hall through life reiterated his persuasion, that his friend possessed an intellect more analogous to that of Bacon, than any person of modern times; and that if he had devoted his powerful understanding to metaphysics, instead of law and politics, he would have thrown an unusual light upon that intricate but valuable region of inquiry. Such was the cordial, reciprocal testimony of these two distinguished men. And, in many respects, — latterly, I hope and believe, in *all* the most essential, — it might be truly said of both, "As face answereth to face in a glass, so does the heart of a man to his friend." — pp 14, 15.

"While he was still at Aberdeen, he received from the Baptist Church at Broadmead, Bristol, an invitation to become their assistant pastor; 'an invitation which he accepted with much doubt and diffidence,' on the understanding that it should not interfere with the completion of his course of studies. He accordingly passed the interval between the college sessions of 1784 and 1785, at Bristol; and then returned to Aberdeen, where he took his degree of Master of Arts, March 30, 1785. On resuming his labors at Broadmead, in conjunction with Dr. Evans, his preaching excited unusual attention. 'The place of worship was often crowded to excess, and many of the most distinguished men in Bristol, including several clergymen, were among his occasional auditors.' In August of the same year, only three months after his quitting Aberdeen, he was appointed classical tutor in the Bristol Academy, on the resignation of the Rev. James Newton. This office he held for more than five years, discharging its duties with honorable zeal and activity.

"At this period of his life, however, Mr. Hall appears to have been in imminent danger of making shipwreck, if not of faith, of the spirit of piety. The free and daring speculations which he advanced in private, grieved and alarmed his judicious friends, although he never promulgated direct and positive error from the pulpit; and his conversational sallies were occasionally marked by a vehemence and extravagance of expression, a bitterness of sarcasm, and a characteristic imprudence, which made him many enemies. Admired as a preacher, courted as a companion, feared as a satirist, looked up to as a tutor, while scarcely one-and-twenty, the only

cause for astonishment is, that, in the intoxication of intellectual pride, he never relaxed his hold of the main doctrines of the gospel, nor was betrayed by youthful impetuosity into flagrant inconsistency. There is something at once touching and instructive in the brief and expressive remarks which Dr Gregory has transcribed from the private diaries of two of his constant friends, in reference to this period of Mr. Hall's career. The first two are from Mr. Fuller's diary.

"1784, May 7. Heard Mr. Robert Hall, Jr. from "He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow." Felt very solemn in hearing some parts. The Lord keep that young man!"

"1785, June 14. Taken up with the company of Mr. Robert Hall, Jr.:—feel much pain for him. The Lord, in mercy to him and His churches in this country, keep him in the path of truth and righteousness!"

"The following are found in Dr. Ryland's Journal:

"June 8, 1785. Robert Hall, Jr. preached wonderfully from Rom. viii. 18. I admire many things in this young man exceedingly, though there are others that make me fear for him. O that the Lord may keep him humble and make him prudent!"

"June 15. Rode to Chipston to attend the ministers' meeting. R. Hall, Jr. preached a glorious sermon on the immutability of God, from James i. 17.

"1786, June 13. Sent off a letter to Robert Hall, Jr., which I wrote chiefly in answer to one of his some months ago, wherein he replied to mine concerning some disagreeable reports from Birmingham: added some new hints respecting another matter lately reported. O that God may keep that young man in the way of truth and holiness!"

"In 1790, Mr. Hall received an invitation from the Baptist congregation at Cambridge, recently deprived of their pastor by the sudden death of Mr. Robinson, to preach to them for a month; and in July of the following year, he was invited to assume the pastoral charge, which he accepted."

"This change was probably the more agreeable to Mr. Hall, as he was involved in a bitter dispute with his colleague, Dr. Evans, and had also given much pain to the congregation at Broadmead, by some extraordinary notions which he held, and by the general style of preaching which he had adopted. He confesses in a pastoral letter, in answer to their remonstrances, that he was a Materialist, 'believing that the nature of man is simple and uniform; that the thinking powers and faculties are a result of a certain organization of matter; and that after death he ceases to be conscious until the resurrection.' But this monstrous doctrine he never broached in the pulpit; and he explicitly states that he was a firm believer in the proper Divinity of Jesus Christ, his merits as the sole ground of acceptance with God, 'without admitting works to have any share in the great business of justification,' and in the necessity of Divine influence to regenerate and sanctify the mind of every man, in order to his becoming a real Christian. He was,

\* From "The Christian Observer."

however, he adds, 'not a Calvinist;' he did not maintain 'the federal headship of Adam, or the imputation of sin to his posterity,' or personal 'election and reprobation.' "

Half the members of Mr. Robinson's congregation were Unitarians, in which belief their pastor died; and Hall was indebted to his very moderate orthodoxy for the invitation he received. But shortly after his connexion with them his feelings and opinions underwent a change, of which the immediate occasion was the death of his father, in March, 1791.

" 'Meditating with the deepest veneration upon the unusual excellencies of a parent now for ever lost to him, he was led to investigate with renewed earnestness, the truth as well as value of those high and sacred principles from which his eminent piety and admirable consistency so evidently flowed. He called to mind, too, several occasions on which his father, partly by the force of reason, partly by that of tender expostulation, had exhorted him to abandon the vague and dangerous speculations to which he was prone. Some important changes in Mr. Hall's sentiments, resulted from an inquiry conducted under such solemn impressions; and among these may be mentioned his renunciation of *materialism*, which, he often declared, he "buried in his father's grave." \*

" 'Attentive to the voice of heavenly admonition, thus addressing him from various quarters, he entered upon his new duties with earnest desires that he might be able to "commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Feeling that to him was consigned the charge of transforming, with God's assistance, a cold and sterile soil into a fruitful field, he determined not to satisfy himself with half measures, but proceeded to expose error, and to defend what he regarded as essential truth. The first sermon, therefore, which he delivered at Cambridge, after he had assumed the office of pastor, was on the doctrine of the atonement and its practical tendencies. Immediately after the conclusion of the service, one of the congregation, who had followed poor Mr. Robinson through all his changes of sentiment, went into the vestry, and said:—"Mr. Hall, this preaching won't do for us: it will only suit a congregation of old women." "Do you mean my sermon, Sir, or the doctrine?" "Your *doctrine*." "Why is it that the *doctrine* is fit only for old women?" "Because it may suit the musings of people tottering upon the brink of the grave, and who are eagerly seeking comfort." "Thank you, Sir, for your concession. The doctrine will not *suit* people of any age, unless it be true; and if it be true, it is not fitted for old women alone, but is equally important at every age."—pp. 30, 31.

"This individual, and three or four other men of influence, with about twenty of the poorer class, shortly afterwards withdrew from the congregation, and assembled for a few months on the Sunday evenings at a private house, where 'the then Rev. William Frend, fellow and tutor of Jesus College, an avowed Socinian, became their instructor.' But the conviction of their host for sedition, and the expulsion of their teacher from the University, soon dispersed this band of seceders."

"We find the following notices of his habits and manners at this period.

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"\* He had always considered materialism, he tells his Bristol friends, as 'a mere metaphysical speculation,' and wished them so to consider it."

"In argument he was impetuous, and sometimes overbearing; but if he lost his temper he was deeply humbled, and would often acknowledge himself to blame. On one of these occasions, when a discussion had become warm, and he had evinced unusual agitation, he suddenly closed the debate, quitted his seat, and, retiring to a remote part of the room, was overheard by a lady who was just entering, to ejaculate with deep feeling, "Lamb of God! Lamb of God! calm my perturbed spirit!"

"Mr. Hall's personal habits, not only at the time of which I am now speaking, but in a certain degree through life, though not precisely those of an absent man, were those of one whose mental occupations kept his thoughts at a distance from various matters of ordinary observance, and made him regardless of a thousand things which most persons never forget. Thus, on his return from an evening visit, if not watched, he would take a wrong hat or great coat;—if not sought after by some of the congregation, he would mistake the proper evening of a week-day service, having in such cases been so absorbed in study, as to lose a day in his reckoning; for the same reason, he often mistook the day or the hour of an appointment;—when on any of his journeys to London he engaged to take up the letters of his friends, it was not unusual, after his return, to find them all in his portmanteau, or in his great-coat pocket. These, or similar instances of forgetfulness, occurred daily; but, exciting the attention of his affectionate and watchful friends, they seldom exposed him to serious inconvenience.

"None of these peculiarities sprung from an affectation of singularity; they simply marked an inattention to things of minor importance. Nor was there united with them a regardlessness of the proprieties of society, a disdain of such civilities and attentions as were usual in the classes with whom he most associated. He had never aimed to acquire a facility in the manners and habits of genteel life; but he had a native ease and grace, which was obviously distinguished from any acquired habit. It was a grace that could neither be bought nor borrowed; on all proper occasions heightened by the dignity which naturally comported with his character and office; and uniformly blended with that genuine simplicity which often accompanies intellectual greatness, and is always, if I mistake not, an attribute of moral greatness."

"His religious conversation in company was not frequent, and for the most part doctrinal; but, in private, his experimental communications were in beauty, elevation, and compass, beyond all I ever heard. . . .

"In his manners he was a close imitator of Dr. Johnson; fond of tea-table talk, and of the society of cultivated females, who had the taste to lend him an ear, and the ability requisite to make attention a favor. He has confessed to me the taking thirty cups of tea in an afternoon, and told me his method was to visit four families and drink seven or eight cups at each."

"He did not, then, read much; but was probably more hindered by pain than by indolence. A page, indeed, was to him more serviceable than a volume to many. Hints from reading or discourse, passing through his great mind, expanded into treatises and systems, until the adopted was lost in the begotten; so much so, that the whole appeared original."—pp. 36–38.

"Dr. Gregory, who became intimately acquainted with him in 1797, adds many other particulars respecting his habits and feelings; as for example:

"When I first saw Mr. Hall, I was struck with his well-proportioned, athletic figure, the unassuming dignity of his deportment, the winning

frankness which marked all that he uttered, and the peculiarities of the most speaking countenance I ever contemplated, animated by eyes radiating with the brilliancy imparted to them by benevolence, wit, and intellectual energy. When he spoke, except in the most ordinary chit-chat, to which, however, he seldom descended, he seemed not merely to communicate his words, but himself: and I then first learnt the difference between one who feels while he is speaking, and whose communicative features tell you that he does, and one who, after he has spoken long and with apparent earnestness, still does not feel.' — p. 39.

" 'For some years, he made it a rule to pay a pastoral visit to every member of his church, once each quarter. He did the same, also, with regard to such of his ordinary hearers as he thought willing to receive him as a minister of religion. These were not calls, but *visits*, and usually paid on evenings, that he might meet the whole assembled family. Among the lower classes, to make them quite at their ease, he would sit down with them at supper; and, that this might involve them in no extra expense, he took care they should all know that he preferred a basin of milk.' — p. 40.

" 'His kindness to children, to servants, to the indigent, nay, to animals, was uniformly manifest. And such was his prevailing cheerfulness, that he seemed to move and breathe in an atmosphere of hilarity, which, indeed, his countenance always indicated, except when the pain in his back affected his spirits, and caused his imagination to dwell upon the evils of Cambridgeshire scenery.

" 'This was, in his case, far from hypothetical grievance. It seriously diminished his happiness at Cambridge, and, at length, was the main cause of his quitting it. In one of my early interviews with him, before I had been a month at that place, he said to me, "What do you think of Cambridge, Sir?" "It is a very interesting place." "Yes, the place where Bacon, and Barrow, and Newton studied, and where Jeremy Taylor was born, cannot but be *interesting*. But that is not what I mean; what do you say to the scenery, Sir?" "Some of the public buildings are very striking, and the college walks very pleasing; but —" and there I hesitated: he immediately added, — "but there is nothing else to be said. What do you think of the surrounding country, Sir? Does it not strike you as very insipid?" "No, not precisely so." "Ay, ay: I had forgotten; you come from a flat country; yet you *must* love hills; there are no hills here." I replied, "Yes, there are; there are Madingley hill, and the Castle hill, and Gogmagog hill." This amused him exceedingly, — and he said, "Why, as to Madingley, there is something in that; it reminds you of the Cottons, and the Cottonian Library; but that is not because Madingley is a high hill, but because Sir Robert Cotton was a great man; and even he was not born *there*. Then, as to your second example, do you know that the Castle hill is the place of the public executions? that is no very pleasant association, sir; and as to your last example, Gogmagog hill is five miles off, and many who go there are puzzled to say whether it is natural or artificial. 'Tis a dismally flat country, Sir; dismally flat. Ely is twelve miles distant, but the road from Cambridge thither scarcely deviates twelve inches from the same level; and *that's* not very interesting. Before I came to Cambridge, I had read in the prize poems, and in some other works of fancy, of 'the banks of the Cam,' of 'the sweetly-flowing stream,' and so on; but when I arrived here, I was sadly disappointed. When I first saw the river as I passed over King's College Bridge, I could not help exclaiming, Why, the stream is standing still to see people drown themselves! and that I am sorry to say is a permanent feeling with me." I questioned the correctness of this impression, but he immediately rejoined, "Shocking place for the spirits, Sir; I wish you may not find it so; it must

be the very focus of suicides. Were you ever at Bristol, Sir? there is scenery, scenery worth looking upon, and worth thinking of: and so there is even at Alvedeen, with all its surrounding barrenness. The trees on the banks of the Don, are as fine as those on the banks of the Cam; and the river is alive, Sir; it falls over precipices, and foams and dashes, so as to invigorate and inspire those who witness it. The Don is a river, Sir, and the Severn is a river; but not even a poet would so designate the Cam unless by an obvious figure he termed it the *sleeping river*."—pp. 41-42.

"His love of sincerity in words and actions was constantly apparent. Once, while he was spending an evening at the house of a friend, a lady who was there on a visit, retired, that her little girl, of four years old, might go to bed. She returned in about half an hour, and said to a lady near her,—"She is gone to sleep. I put on my night-cap, and lay down by her, and she soon dropped off." Mr. Hall, who overheard this, said,—  
"Excuse me, madam: do you wish your child to grow up a liar?" "Oh dear no, Sir; I should be shocked at such a thing." "Then bear with me while I say, you must never act a lie before her: children are very quick observers, and soon learn that that which assumes to be what it is not, is a lie, whether acted or spoken." This was uttered with a kindness which precluded offence, yet with a seriousness that could not be forgotten."—p. 49.

"In one of my early interviews with Mr. Hall, I used the word *felicity* three or four times in rather quick succession. He asked,—  
"Why do you say *felicity*, Sir? *Happiness* is a better word, more musical and genuine English, coming from the Saxon." "Not more musical, I think, Sir." "Yes, more musical, and so are words derived from the Saxon generally. Listen, Sir: 'My heart is smitten, and withered like grass;'—there's plaintive music. Listen again, Sir: 'Under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice;'—there's cheerful music." "Yes, but *rejoice* is French." "True, but all the rest is Saxon, and *rejoice* is almost out of tune with the other words. Listen again: 'Thou hast delivered my eyes from tears, my soul from death, and my feet from falling;' all Saxon, Sir, except *delivered*. I could think of the word *tear*, Sir, till I wept. Then again, for another noble specimen, and almost all good old Saxon-English: 'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.'"—p. 50.

"Early in the year 1799, a severe fever, which brought him, in his own apprehension, and that of his friends, to the brink of the grave, gave him an opportunity of experiencing the support yielded by the doctrines of the cross "in the near view of death and judgment." He "never before felt his mind so calm and happy." The impression was not only salutary, but abiding; and it again prompted him to the investigation of one or two points, with regard to which he had long felt himself floating in uncertainty. Although he had for some years steadily and earnestly enforced the necessity of divine influence in the transformation of character, and in perseverance in a course of consistent, holy obedience, yet he spoke of it as "the influence of the spirit of God," and never in express terms, as "the influence of the Holy Spirit." The reason was, that though he fully believed the necessity of spiritual agency in commencing and continuing the spiritual life, he doubted the doctrine of the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit. But about this time, he was struck with the fact, that, whenever in private prayer he was in the most deeply devotional frame, "most overwhelmed with the sense that he was nothing, and God was all in all," he always felt himself inclined to adopt a Trinitarian doxology. This circumstance, occurring frequently, and more frequently meditated upon in a tone of honest and anxious inquiry, issued at length in

a persuasion that the Holy Spirit is really and truly God, and not an emanation. It was not, however, until 1800, that he publicly included the personality of the Holy Spirit, in his statements of the doctrine of spiritual influence.'

“His prayers were remarkable for their simplicity and their devotional feeling. No person could listen to them without being persuaded, that he who uttered them was really engaged in prayer, was holding communion with his God and Father in Christ Jesus. His tones and his countenance throughout these exercises, were those of one most deeply imbued with a sense of his unworthiness, and throwing himself at the feet of the Great Eternal, conscious that he could present no claim for a single blessing, but the blood of atonement, yet animated by the cheering hope that the voice of that blood would prevail. The structure of these prayers never indicated any preconceived plan. They were the genuine effusions of a truly devotional spirit, animated by a vivid recollection of what, in his own state, in that of the congregation, of the town and vicinity, needed most ardently to be laid before the Father of Mercies. Thus they were remarkably comprehensive, and furnished a far greater variety on the successive occasions of public worship, than those of any other minister whom I have ever known. The portions which were devoted to intercession, operated most happily in drawing the affections of his people towards himself; since they showed how completely his Christian sympathy had prepared him to make their respective cases his own.

“The commencement of his sermons did not excite much expectation in strangers, except they were such as recollected how the mental agitation produced by diffidence, characterized the first sentences of some of the orators of antiquity. He began with hesitation, and often in a very low and feeble tone, coughing frequently, as though he were oppressed by asthmatic obstructions. As he proceeded, his manner became easy, graceful, and at length highly impassioned; his voice also acquired more flexibility, body, and sweetness, and, in all his happier and more successful efforts, swelled into a stream of the most touching and impressive melody. The farther he advanced, the more spontaneous, natural, and free from labor, seemed the progression of thought. He announced the results of the most extensive reading, of the most patient investigation, or of the profoundest thinking, with such unassuming simplicity, yet set them in such a position of obvious and lucid reality, that the auditors wondered how things so simple and manifest should have escaped them. Throughout his sermons he kept his subject thoroughly in view, and so incessantly brought forward new arguments, or new illustrations, to confirm or to explain it, that with him amplification was almost invariably accumulative in its tendency. One thought was succeeded by another, and that by another, and another, each more weighty than the preceding, each more calculated to deepen and render permanent the ultimate impression. He could at pleasure adopt the unadorned, the ornamental, or the energetic; and, indeed, combine them in every diversity of modulation. In his higher flights, what he said of Burke, might, with the slightest deduction, be applied to himself, “that his imperial fancy laid all nature under tribute, and collected riches from every scene of the creation, and every walk of art;” and at the same time, that could be affirmed of Mr. Hall, which could not be affirmed of Mr. Burke, that he never fatigued and oppressed by gaudy and superfluous imagery. Whenever the subject obviously justified it, he would yield the reins to an eloquence more diffusive and magnificent than the ordinary course of pulpit instruction seemed to require; yet, so exquisite was his perception of beauty, and so sound his judgment, that not the coldest taste, provided it were real taste, could ever wish an image

omitted which Mr. Hall had introduced. His inexhaustible variety augmented the general effect. The same images, the same illustrations, scarcely ever recurred. So ample were his stores, that repetition of every kind was usually avoided; while in his illustrations he would connect and contrast what was disjointed and opposed, or distinctly unfold what was abstracted or obscure, in such terms as were generally intelligible, not only to the well-informed, but to the meanest capacity. As he advanced to his practical applications, all his mental powers were shown in the most palpable but finely balanced exercise. His mind would, if I may so speak, collect itself and come forth with a luminous activity, proving as he advanced, how vast, and, in some important senses, how next to irresistible, those powers were. In such seasons, his preaching communicated universal animation: his congregation would seem to partake of his spirit, to think and feel as he did, to be fully influenced by the presence of the objects which he had placed before them, fully actuated by the motives which he had enforced with such energy and pathos.

"All was doubtless heightened by his singular rapidity of utterance,—by the rhythmical structure of his sentences, calculated at once for the transmission of the most momentous truths, for the powers of his voice, and for the convenience of breathing at measured intervals;—and, more than all, by the unequivocal earnestness and sincerity which pervaded the whole, and by the eloquence of his most speaking countenance and penetrating eye. In his sublimer strains, not only was every faculty of the soul engorged and in entire operation, but his very features seemed fully to sympathize with the spirit, and to give out, nay, to throw out, thought, and sentiment, and feeling." — Vol. vi. pp. 51–55.

Hall's first political pamphlet, entitled "Christianity consistent with a Love of Freedom," was published by him at the age of seven and twenty, in the year 1790. He would not, during his life, consent to its republication, but it appears in Dr. Gregory's edition of his works. "It was called forth by a sermon in which the preacher had endeavoured to spread alarm among the Dissenters, by endeavouring to show, that the principles of civil liberty had been advocated only by Dr. Priestley and the Unitarians." "Hall maintained," says "The Quarterly Review," "that the revolution in France may be defended on its *principles*, against the friends of arbitrary power, by displaying the value of freedom, the rights of mankind, the folly and injustice of those regal or aristocratic pretensions by which those rights were invaded, and that accordingly in this light it had been justified with the utmost success; or, again, that it might be defended upon its *expediency*, by exhibiting the elements of government which it had composed, the laws it had enacted, and the tendency of both to extend and perpetuate that liberty which was its ultimate object.\* Yet the days were at hand, when Hall could commend Mr. Gisborne as the individual to whom the country was under *unequalled obligations* for discrediting this *very doctrine of expediency*, which threatens, says Hall, 'to annihilate religion, to loosen the foundations of morals, and to debase the character of the nation'† And for the *principles*,—the real principles,—of the French Revolution, Hall lived to lay them bare

\* Vol. III. p. 22.

† Vol. IV. p. 139.

in one of the most eloquent and philosophical sermons ever preached in any pulpit in any country, — a sermon, for which England was most grateful at the time, and the extraordinary merit of which renders it painful to us at this moment to unveil the earlier errors of so great a man, which, but for this republication of them, might, for us at least, have slept till doomsday."

His next political publication was, "An Apology for the Freedom of the Press," published in 1793. "Again," says "The Quarterly Review," "Hall appears to have had some misgivings as to the propriety of his conduct in sending this forth to the world; but as he did consent, ten years before his death, to its republication, Dr. Gregory may be here supposed to stand excused in comprising it in the complete edition of his works; — still some regard might have been had to the reluctance which Hall manifested to comply with the loud and repeated importunities of his friends, in this instance also,\* and, though certainly he did at length yield to their wishes, afraid lest his reserve should be mistaken, and imputed to a change of opinions (which he had indeed undergone in many respects, but which he was loth to confess, and of which, perhaps, he was not himself fully conscious), still in the advertisement to his new edition he puts forth an apology, such as it is, for the acrimony and vehemence of the work in general, and, in particular, suppresses altogether one memorable passage of the original preface, we will not say 'delineating,' but mangling the character of Bishop Horsley. It was a passage, which, 'on mature reflection, appeared to the writer not quite consistent either with the spirit of Christianity or with the reverence due to departed genius.'"

"The origin of this pamphlet," says the writer in "Tait's Magazine," "is memorable; it is *historical*. Simultaneous with the riots in Birmingham, when the lives and property of Dissenters and Reformers were exposed to the fury of an ignorant and brutal rabble, there were riots in Manchester, and in Cambridge, where Mr. Hall was then a popular minister. Mr. Musgrave, a respectable reformer, was subjected to insult and indignity, aggravated by the sarcastic notice taken of the matter in the House of Commons, by the member for Cambridge. That honorable person said, 'Mr. Musgrave had spoken seditious words, and the (loyal) mob had compelled him to sing *God save the King*.' Mr. Hall, in his pamphlet, denied this statement; and asserted that the whole crime of Mr. Musgrave, heinous enough in those times, was 'love for his country, and zeal for Parliamentary Reform; and that it would be happy for the nation if a portion only of the integrity and virtue which adorned his character, could be infused into our great men.' On the evening after the outrage, Mr. Hall was at a book-society meeting, when every individual present expressed himself in the strongest terms of indignation at the insult, and argued how de-

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\* Vol. III. pp. 80, 184, 202.

airable it was that some man of talent in Cambridge should advocate the cause of the friends of liberty. To this office Mr. Hall yielded 'in an evil hour'; at least, as he says himself, if 'I had any wish to obtain reputation as a political writer.' But the principles advanced he believed correct, and they were his; and his apology is concluded by his reported saying, — 'Perhaps the pamphlet had its use in those perilous times' — no very violent deprecation of his first great political transgression. This pamphlet became exceedingly popular both in Britain and America. From the advertisement prefixed to the third edition, we beg to submit an extract, as a fair specimen of Mr. Hall's forcible style, and an emphatic statement of some of his opinions.

"Since this pamphlet was first published, the principles it aims to support have received confirmation from such a train of disastrous events, that it might have been hoped we should have learned those lessons from misfortunes which reason had failed to impress. Uninstructed by our calamities, we still persist in an unprovoked attack on the liberties of France, and are eager to take our part in the great drama of crimes which is acting on the continent of Europe. Meantime, the violence and injustice of the internal administration keep pace with our iniquities abroad. Liberty and Truth are silenced. An unrelenting system of prosecution [Query, persecution?] prevails. The cruel and humiliating sentence passed upon Mr. Muir and Mr. Palmer, men of unblemished morals, and of the purest patriotism, the outrages committed on Dr. Priestley, and his intended removal to America, are events which will mark the end of the eighteenth century with indelible reproach. But what has Liberty to expect from a Minister [Pitt] who has the audacity to assert the King's right to land as many foreign troops as he pleases, without the previous consent of Parliament? If this doctrine be true, the boasted equilibrium of the constitution, all the barriers our ancestors have opposed to the encroachments of arbitrary power, are idle, ineffectual precautions."

"After pursuing this train of reasoning with the same clearness and vigor, it is pushed home to the character of Mr. Pitt in this splendid passage: —

"But it is needless any farther to expose the effrontery, or detect the sophistry of this shameless apostate. The character of Pitt is written in sunbeams. A veteran in fraud, while in the bloom of youth; betraying first, and then prosecuting his earliest friends and connexions, falsifying every promise, and violating every political engagement; ever making the fairest professions a prelude to the darkest actions; punishing, with the utmost rigor, the publisher of the identical paper himself had circulated,\* are traits in the conduct of Pitt which entitle him to a fatal preeminence in guilt. The qualities of this man balance, in an extraordinary manner, and sustain each other; the influence of his station, the extent of his enormities, invest him with a kind of splendor; and the contempt we feel for his meanness and duplicity is lost in the dread of his machinations, and the abhorrence of his crimes. Too long has he insulted the patience of his countrymen; nor ought we, when we observe the indifference with which the iniquities

\* Mr. Hall has this note: "Mr. Holt, printer at Newark, now imprisoned in Newgate for two years, for reprinting, *verbatim*, "An Address to the people on Reform," which was sanctioned for certain, and probably written, by the Duke of Richmond and Mr. Pitt."

of Pitt's Administration are viewed, to reproach the Romans for tamely submitting to the tyranny of Caligula or Domitian. We had fondly hoped a mild philosophy was about to diffuse over the globe the triumph of liberty and peace. But, alas, these hopes are fled! The Continent presents little but one wide picture of desolation, misery, and crimes; *on the earth, distress of nations and perplexity, men's hearts failing them for fear, for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.'*

"What follows, takes the tone of prophecy.

"That the seeds of public convulsion are sown in every country in Europe (our own not excepted), it were vain to deny; seeds which, without the wisest precautions, and the most conciliating counsels, will break out, it is to be feared, in the overthrow of all governments. How this catastrophe may be averted, or how, — should that be impossible, — its evils may be mitigated and diminished, demands the deepest consideration of every European statesman. *The ordinary routine of ministerial chicanery is quite unequal to the task.* A philosophic comprehension of mind, which, leaving the beaten road of politics, shall adapt itself to new situations, and profit by the vicissitudes of opinion; equally removed from an attachment to antiquated forms, and useless innovations; capable of rising above the emergency of the moment to the most remote consequences of a transaction; combining the past with the present and the future, and knowing how to defend with firmness, or concede with dignity; these are the qualities which the situation of Europe renders indispensable. It would be mockery of our present Ministry to ask, whether *they* possess those qualities.'

"In composing another new preface to the Apology, nearly thirty years later, in 1821, Mr. Hall, so far from retracting or softening the severity with which he had treated Mr. Pitt, deliberately repeats his opinions; convinced, as he asserts, that 'the policy, foreign and domestic, of that celebrated statesman, has inflicted a more incurable wound on the constitution, and entailed more permanent and irreparable calamities on the nation, than that of any other minister in the annals of British history. A simple reflection,' he continues, 'will be sufficient to evince the unparalleled magnitude of his apostasy, — which is, that the memory of the son of Chatham, the vehement opposer of the American war, the champion of Reform, and the idol of the people, has become the rallying point of Toryism; the type and symbol of whatever is most illiberal in principle, and intolerant in practice.' "

We return to "The Quarterly Review." The writer says: —

"In his former essay on 'Christianity consistent with a Love of Freedom,' the praises of Dr. Priestley were sung with little reserve; — his religious tenets, it is true, appeared to Hall erroneous in the extreme, but Hall was not the man to suffer any difference of sentiment to diminish his sensibility to virtue, or his admiration of genius; — he tells of his enlightened and active mind, — of the light he had poured into every department of science, — and in reference to Mr. —'s supposed allusion to Priestley, 'as a busy, active man in regenerating the nations,' he remarks: —

"Distinguished merit will ever rise superior to oppression, and will draw lustre from reproach. The vapors which gather round the rising sun, and

follow it in its course, seldom fail at the close of it to form a magnificent theatre for its reception, and to invest with variegated tints, and with a softened effulgence, the luminary they cannot hide." — Vol. III. p. 28.

"Again, Priestley is the man he delights to honor in the 'Apology,' and he laments—

"the ever-memorable era in the annals of bigotry and fanaticism (i. e. the Birmingham riots), when Europe beheld with astonishment and regret, the outrage sustained by philosophy, in the most enlightened of countries and in the first of her sons." — Vol. III. p. 151.

"For those were displays of loyalty in which the dissenters must acknowledge themselves utterly defective:—

"They have never," he continues, "plundered their neighbours, to show their attachment to the king, nor has their zeal broken out into oaths and execrations. They have not proclaimed their respect for regular government, by a breach of the laws, or attempted to maintain tranquillity by riots. These beautiful specimens of loyalty" (he then adds, *O mens cæca hominum!*) "belong to the virtue and moderation of the high church party alone, with whose character they perfectly coincide." — Vol. III. p. 153.

"But it will be said that Hall, in the passages to which we have referred, praised the philosopher only in Priestley: still we are of Hall's later and more mature opinion (however opposed to his first), which will be found recorded in a review of Dr. Gregory's Letters,\* that 'the fame and science of Priestley procured from the Christian world a forbearance and complaisance to which he was ill entitled;'" moreover, that the doctrine of fatalism, which he grafted upon primitive Socinianism, by representing the human mind as perfectly passive in its operations, annihilated all distinction between virtue and vice, the very foundation of rewards and punishments in a future world,—and that, when Priestley maintained that a perfect Necessitarian, or 'in other words a philosopher of his own stamp, had nothing to do with repentance and remorse,' he was actually 'subverting the whole fabric of society;'" † nay more, that his doctrine of materialism, which was further superinduced upon the original tenets of his sect, rendered the hope of another state of existence a mere delusion, for that, as the material particles of which any individual is made up are said by physiologists to undergo an entire change in the course of seven years, their flux is such, that a man of forty-nine would lose his identity no less than seven times, and which of these seven beings was to be the subject of reward and punishment in another life, as responsible for his actions in this, is a problem which it would be difficult to resolve, nor indeed of much concern to that individual, to his present self, if resolved ever so ingeniously. No wonder, therefore, that Hall, now at length alive to the tendency of Priestley's tenets, should represent them as differing from those of Socinus only as sedition or sacrilege differs from theft, and should consider the

\* Vol. IV. p. 183.

† Vol. V. p. 44.

terms 'anti-scripturalists,' 'humanitarians,' 'semi-deists,' '*Priestleians*,' as convertible terms; \* or that he should contemptuously speak of Mr. Belsham as 'a mere train-bearer in a very *insignificant procession*,' that procession being, as we infer from a preceding sentence, 'Lindsey, *Priestley*, Hartley, and Jebb.' †

‡ "His Eulogy on Dr. Priestley led him to be suspected of Socinianism; which caused him to exclaim in his own strong, but not most commendable style, 'If that were the case I should deserve to be tied to the tail of the great red dragon, and whipped round the nethermost hell to all eternity.'"

In 1800, Hall published his celebrated "Sermon on Modern Infidelity," which was followed in 1802 by his "Reflections on War," and in 1803 by his Fast-Day Sermon on "Sentiments proper to the present Crisis." Of the latter Mr. Pitt said that the last ten pages were equal in eloquence to any passage of the same length in any author, ancient or modern.

§ "But in the meridian of his fame, if not of his usefulness, a cloud arose, which for a while enveloped his faculties in the darkness of disease, and occasioned his disappearance from the scene of his celebrity. Early in 1803, the pain in his back increased both in intenseness and continuity, depriving him almost always of refreshing sleep, and depressing his spirits to an unusual degree. Horse exercise was recommended; but the benefit which he seemed at first to derive from it, was transient; and at length, a state of high nervous excitement was induced, the effect of bodily disorder acting upon a mind overstrained, which terminated in an awful eclipse of his reason. 'He who had so long been the theme of universal admiration, became the subject of as extensive a sympathy.' This event occurred in November, 1804. Mr. Hall was placed under the care of Dr. Arnold, of Leicester, whose attention, with the blessing of God, in about two months, restored him to society. In April, 1805, he resumed his ministerial functions; but a return of his old pain with aggravated severity, in the same year, was followed by a relapse, which again withdrew him from public duty. Under the judicious care of the late Dr. Cox, of Bristol, he soon regained the complete balance of his mental powers; but it was now deemed requisite to his permanent recovery, that he should resign the pastoral office at Cambridge, and, for at least a year, abstain from preaching, and avoid all strong excitement. Thus terminated a connexion which had subsisted, with the happiest results, for fifteen years; but the mutual attachment between the pastor and his flock survived his removal, and remained undiminished till his death." ||

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\* Vol. IV. p. 185.

† Vol. IV. p. 219.

‡ From "The Christian Observer."

§ From "The Eclectic Review."

|| "Among other substantial marks of their gratitude and attachment, his Cambridge friends purchased for him, during his illness, a liberal life annuity, and raised a further sum, to be at his own disposal at death."

\* "A letter from Sir James Mackintosh, then Recorder of Bombay, written on hearing of the mental indisposition of his early friend, is so affectionate and amiable in spirit, and so elegantly written, that we cannot forbear transferring part of it to our pages.

"Bombay, Sept. 21, 1805.

"MY DEAR HALL,

"I believe that, in the hurry of leaving England, I did not answer the letter which you wrote me in December, 1803. I did not, however, forget your interesting young friend, from whom I had one letter from Constantinople and another from Cairo, where he now is. No request of *yours* could indeed be lightly esteemed by me.

"It happened to me a few days ago, in drawing up (merely for my own use) a short sketch of my life, that I had occasion to give a faithful statement of my recollection of the circumstances of my first acquaintance with you. On the most impartial survey of my early life, I could see nothing which tended so to excite and invigorate my understanding, and to direct it towards high, though, perhaps, scarcely accessible objects, as my intimacy with you. Five-and-twenty years are now past since we first met, yet hardly any thing has occurred which has left a deeper or more agreeable impression on my mind. I now remember the extraordinary union of brilliant fancy with acute intellect, which would have excited more admiration than it has done, if it had been dedicated to the amusement of the great and the learned, instead of being consecrated to the far more noble office of consoling, instructing, and reforming the poor and the forgotten."

"Sir James then delicately approaches his friend's mental malady, which was the probable cause of his writing.

"It is not," he continues, "given us to preserve an exact medium. Nothing is so difficult as to decide how much ideal models ought to be combined with experience; how much of the future ought to be let into the present, in the progress of the human mind. To ennoble and purify, without raising us above the sphere of our usefulness; to qualify us for what we ought to seek, without unfitting us for that to which we ought to submit, are great and difficult problems which can be but imperfectly solved.

"It is certain the child may be too manly, not only for his present enjoyments, but for his future prospects. Perhaps, my good friend, you have fallen into this error of superior natures. From this error has, I think, arisen that calamity with which it has pleased Providence to visit you: which, to a mind less fortified by reason and religion, I should not dare to mention; but which I really consider in you as little more than the indignant struggles of a pure mind with the low realities which surround it,—the fervent aspirations after regions more congenial to it,—and a momentary blindness produced by the contemplation of objects too bright for human vision. I may say, in this case, in a far grander sense than that in which the words were originally spoken by our great poet,

—"and yet

The light that led astray was light from Heaven"

"On your return to us, you must surely have found consolation in the only terrestrial produce which is pure and truly exquisite; in the affections and attachments you have inspired, which you were most worthy to inspire, and which no human pollution can rob of their heavenly nature. . . .

\* From "Tait's Edinburgh Magazine."

I exhort you, my most worthy friend, to check your best propensities for the sake of obtaining their object. You cannot live *for* men without living *with* them. Serve God then by the active service of men. Contemplate more the good you can *do*, than the evil you can only *lament*. Allow yourself to see the loveliness of virtue amidst all its imperfections; and employ your vivid imagination, not so much by bringing it into contrast with the model of ideal perfection, as in gently blending some of the fainter colors of the latter with the brighter hues of real experienced excellence; thus heightening their beauty, instead of broadening the shade which must surround us till we awaken from this dream in other spheres of existence.' "

\* " After spending some months among his relatives and friends in Leicestershire, Mr. Hall fixed his residence for some time at Enderby, a sequestered village near Leicester, where he gradually regained his bodily health and a renewed capacity for public usefulness. He soon began to preach in some of the adjacent villages, and occasionally to a small congregation assembling in Harvey Lane, Leicester, which had, several years before, been under the care of Mr. (now Dr.) Carey, the eminent missionary at Serampore. He at length received and accepted an invitation to become their stated pastor; and over this church, he presided for nearly twenty years, during which the attendance steadily increased, so that it was twice found necessary to enlarge the place of worship. In the year 1808, his marriage to a prudent and estimable woman, greatly added to his domestic comfort, and had a happy effect upon his spirits, while it contributed materially to promote the regularity of his habits. Altogether, his residence at Leicester, Dr. Gregory considers to have been undoubtedly the period in which Mr. Hall was most happy, active, and useful. His writings also, during this period, though by no means numerous, tended greatly to augment his influence upon society. The first of these, one of the most masterly of his productions, was his critique upon 'Zeal without Innovation,' published in the first series of 'The Eclectic Review.' This article, which he undertook at the earnest entreaty of the late Mr. Robinson of Leicester, was attacked with much bitterness in 'The Christian Observer,' and occasioned the first denunciation of clerical hostility against the journal in which it appeared. It obtained also a wide circulation in the form of a separate pamphlet. The sermon 'On the Discouragements and Supports of the Christian Ministry,' the Address to Eustace Carey, and the Funeral Oration for the Princess Charlotte, which rank among the author's most valuable and finished compositions, were also produced during his residence at Leicester; as well as various tracts, biographical sketches, reviews, and his polemical works relating to the Terms of Communion. His engagements for the press were not suffered, however, to draw him aside from his pastoral duties; nor did the almost constant pain which he suffered from his constitutional complaint, throughout the whole time of his residence at Leicester, diminish his mental energy. When it is

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\* From "The Eclectic Review."

known that, for more than twenty years, he was unable, through pain, to pass a whole night in bed, it will be thought surprising, Dr. Gregory remarks, that he wrote so much; nay, that he did not sink into premature dotage.

"Mr. Hall had attained his sixty-second year, when the death of Dr. Ryland, in 1825, led to his being invited to succeed to the pastoral charge over the Baptist church at Broadmead, Bristol, — the scene of his first continuous labors, and of his closing ministry. Some few of the friends of his early life survived to welcome his return among them; and every thing but the infirm state of his health, conspired to promote his own comfort there, as well as the prosperity of the society with which he had thus, after so long an interval, renewed a sacred connexion. As the indications of infirm age rapidly exhibited themselves, they were unaccompanied by a decaying mind or a querulous spirit. About six years before his death, he was attacked with a spasmodic affection of the chest, a phlethoric habit having been induced by his inability to take regular exercise. This disorder gradually increased, occasioning several alarming attacks, till at length, on the 10th of February, 1831, he was seized with the first of a series of paroxysms which terminated in his dissolution. For ten days, he suffered, with short intervals, great physical torture, without a murmur, without an expression of irritability; employing the moments of comparative ease to express his thankfulness to God for his unspeakable mercies, — his humble hope and entire submission, — his simple, unshaken reliance upon his Saviour, — and his affectionate acknowledgments of the care and assiduities of his family and friends around him. He also exhorted both the members of his family and others occasionally present, to make religion their chief and incessant concern; urging especially upon some of the younger persons, the duty of openly professing their attachment to Christ and his cause.

"When he was a little recovered from one of his severe paroxysms," says his medical attendant, Mr. Chandler, "I asked him whether he felt much pain. He replied that his sufferings were great: 'but what (he added) are my sufferings to the sufferings of Christ? His sufferings were infinitely greater: his sufferings were complicated. God has been very merciful to me, — very merciful: I am a poor creature, — an unworthy creature; but God has been very kind, — very merciful.'" He then alluded to the character of the sufferings of crucifixion, remarking, how intense and insufferable they must have been, and asked many minute questions on what I might suppose was the process by which crucifixion brought about death. He particularly inquired respecting the effect of pain, — the nervous irritation, — the thirst, — the oppression of breathing, — the disturbance of the circulation, — and the hurried action of the heart, till the conversation gradually brought him to a consideration of his own distress; when he again reverted to the lightness of his sufferings when contrasted with those of Christ. He spoke of our Lord's "enduring the contradiction of sinners against himself," — of the ingratitude and unkindness he received from those for whom he went about doing good, — of the combination of the mental and corporeal agonies sustained on the cross, — the length of time during which our Lord hung, — the exhaustion occasioned, &c.

He then remarked how differently he had been situated; that, though he had endured as much or more than fell to the lot of most men, yet all had been in mercy. I here remarked to him, that, with most persons, the days of ease and comfort were far more numerous than those of pain and sorrow. He replied: "But I have been a great sufferer in my time: it is, however, generally true: the dispensations of God have been merciful to me." He then observed, that a contemplation of the sufferings of Christ was the best antidote against impatience under any troubles we might experience; and recommended me to reflect much on this subject, when in pain or distress, or in expectation of death.' — p. 112.

"In the last agony, his sufferings extorted the exclamation, 'O the sufferings of this body!' 'But are you comfortable in your mind?' asked Mrs. Hall. 'Very comfortable, very comfortable,' was his reply; adding, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come.' — One of his daughters finished the imperfect sentence, by involuntarily supplying the word 'quickly'; on which her dying father gave her a look expressive of the most complacent delight. To the last moment, there was no failure of his mental vigor or composure; and almost his last articulate sentence intimated, with his accustomed courteousness, the fear that he should fatigue by his pressure the friend upon whom he leaned for support in wrestling with the last enemy. There was a terrible grandeur in the conflict. What a moment was that which succeeded to the final pang!" \*

† "We have now exhibited Mr. Hall in various aspects, but we must give a specimen of his familiar conversation, his 'table-talk,' which was distinguished by great originality and vivacity; and which, had a Boswell been at hand, might have furnished an entertaining and instructive volume. The Rev. Mr. Balmer, of Berwick-upon-Tweed, has Boswellized three or four conversations, from which we copy the following passages. They are presumed not to be above his ordinary style in unbending with any literary and religious friend, and they are not equal to many of his occasional effusions.

"On informing him, that I had been perplexed with doubts as to the extent of the death of Christ, and expressing a wish to know his opinion, he replied, "There, Sir, my sentiments give me the advantage of you; for on that point I entertain no doubts whatever: I believe firmly in 'general redemption'; I often preach it, and I consider the fact, that 'Christ died for all men,' as the only basis that can support the universal offer of the Gospel." — "But you admit the doctrine of election, which necessarily implies limitation. Do you not think that election and particular redemption are inseparably connected?" — "I believe firmly," he rejoined, "in election, but I do not think it involves particular redemption; I consider the sacrifice of Christ as a remedy, not only adapted, but intended for all, and as placing all in a salvable state; as removing all barriers to their salvation, except such as arise from their own perversity and depravity. But God foresaw or knew that none would accept the remedy, merely of themselves, and

\* "Mr. Hall expired, Feb. 21, 1831, having not quite completed his sixty-seventh year."

† From "The Christian Observer."

therefore, by what may be regarded as a separate arrangement, he resolved to glorify his mercy, by effectually applying salvation to a certain number of our race, through the agency of his Holy Spirit. I apprehend, then, that the limiting clause implied in election, refers not to the purchase, but to the application of redemption."

"In the course of our conversation respecting the extent of Christ's death, Mr. Hall expatiated at considerable length on the number and variety of the Scripture expressions, in which it seems to be either explicitly asserted or necessarily implied, that it was intended not for the elect exclusively, but for mankind generally, such as "the world," "all," "all men," "every man," &c. He made some striking remarks on the danger of twisting such expressions from their natural and obvious import, and on the absurdity of the interpretations put on them by some of the advocates of particular redemption. He mentioned, especially, the absurdity of explaining "the world," John iii. 16, to signify the elect world, as the text would then teach that some of the elect may not believe. He noticed farther, that the doctrine of general redemption was not only asserted expressly in many texts, but presupposed in others, such as "Destroy not with thy meat," &c. and "Denying the Lord that bought them;" and that it was incorporated with other parts of the Christian system, particularly with the universal offers and invitation of the Gospel."

"With regard to the question of "Terms of Communion," we had repeated conversations. On this subject he spoke with uncommon interest and animation; and seemed surprised at the arguments of those who were opposed to his views. I recollect, in particular, the effect produced on him, when I stated that I had heard Dr. Lawson, of Selkirk, declare, that he would not admit a Roman Catholic, not even Fenelon, or Pascal, to the table of the Lord: Mr. Hall, who had been previously reclining on three chairs, instantly raised himself on his elbow, and spoke without intermission and with great rapidity for nearly a quarter of an hour; expatiating on the amazing absurdity and presumption of rejecting those whom Christ receives, and of refusing to hold communion on earth with those with whom we hope to associate in heaven. During all this time his manner was exceedingly vehement, his other arm was in continual motion, and his eyes, naturally most piercing, were lighted up with unusual brilliancy."

"It was interesting and amusing to observe how Mr. Hall's exquisite sensibility to literary beauty, intermingled with, and qualified the operation of his principles and leanings, both as a Christian and Dissenter. Of this, I recollect various instances, but shall give only one. While conversing respecting Archbishop Magee, his talents, sentiments, conduct, &c., I quoted, as a proof of his high-church principles, a remark from a charge then newly published: it was to this effect: That the Roman Catholics have a church without a religion; the Dissenters have a religion without a church, but the Establishment has both a church and a religion. Mr. Hall had not heard the remark before, and was exceedingly struck with it. "That, Sir," he exclaimed, smiling, "is a beautiful saying. I have not heard so fine an observation for a long time. It is admirable, Sir." You admire it, I presume, for its point, not for its truth. H. "I admire it, Sir, for its plausibility and cleverness. It is false, and yet it seems to contain a mass of truth. It is an excellent stone for a churchman to pelt with."

"Balmer. May I ask, Sir, what writers you would most recommend to a young minister? H. "Why, Sir, I feel very incompetent to give directions on that head; I can only say that I have learned far more from John Howe, than from any other author I ever read. There is an astonishing magnificence in his conceptions. He had not the same perception of the beautiful, as of the sublime; and hence his endless subdivisions." B. That was the

fault of his age. *H.* "In part, Sir; but he has more of it than many of the writers of that period, than Barrow, for example, who was somewhat earlier. There was, I think, an innate inaptitude in Howe's mind for discerning minute graces and proprieties, and hence his sentences are often long and cumbersome. Still he was unquestionably the greatest of the Puritan divines."

"After adverting to several of Howe's works, Mr. Hall said, in reference to his *"Blessedness of the Righteous"*: "Perhaps, Baxter's *'Saint's Rest'* is fitted to make a deeper impression on the majority of readers. Baxter enforces a particular idea with extraordinary clearness, force, and earnestness. His appeals to the conscience are irresistible. Howe, again, is distinguished by calmness, self-possession, majesty, and comprehensiveness; and for my own part, I decidedly prefer him to Baxter. I admire, exceedingly, his *'Living Temple,'* his sermon on the *'Redeemer's Tears,'* &c.; but, in my opinion, the best thing he ever wrote, is his defence of the severity of the Gospel offer. I refer to the treatise, called, the *'Reconciliableness of God's Prescience of the Sins of Men, with his Counsels, Exhortations, and whatever other Means he used to prevent them.'* This I regard as the most profound, the most philosophical, and the most valuable of all Howe's writings."

"*B.* Do you think highly of Dr. Owen? *H.* "No, Sir, by no means. Have you read much of Owen, Sir; do you admire him?" *B.* I have read his Preliminary Exercitations to his great work on the Hebrews; his exposition of particular verses here and there; his book on church government; and some of his smaller treatises. I do not greatly admire him, nor have I learned much from him. *H.* "You astonish me, Sir, by your patience. You have accomplished a Herculean undertaking in reading Owen's Preliminary Exercitations. To me he is intolerably heavy and prolix."

"*"Pray, Sir,"* I said, "do you admire Macknight as a commentator?" "Yes, Sir," he replied, "I do, very much; I think it would be exceedingly difficult indeed to come after him in expounding the Apostolic Epistles. I admit, at the same time, that he has grievous deficiencies: there is a lamentable want of spirituality and elevation about him. He never sets his foot in the other world if he can get a hole to step into in this; and he never gives a passage a meaning which would render it applicable and useful in all ages, if he can find in it any local or temporary allusion. He makes fearful havoc, Sir, of the text on which you preached to-day. His exposition of it is inimitably absurd." The text referred to was Ephesians i. 8. "Wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence;" and the "wisdom and prudence" are explained by Macknight, not of the wisdom of God, as displayed in the scheme of redemption, but of the wisdom and prudence granted to the Apostles to enable them to discharge their office.

"Mr. Hall repeatedly referred to Dr. —, (query, Chalmers?) 'and always in high admiration of his general character. The following are some remarks, respecting that extraordinary individual. "Pray, Sir, did you ever know any man who had that singular faculty of repetition possessed by Dr. —? Why, Sir, he often reiterates the same thing ten or twelve times in the course of a few pages. Even Burke himself had not so much of that peculiarity. His mind resembles that optical instrument lately invented: what do you call it?" *B.* You mean, I presume, the kaleidoscope. *H.* "Yes, Sir, it is just as if thrown into a kaleidoscope. Every turn presents the object in a new and a beautiful form; but the object presented is still the same. Have you not been struck, Sir, with the degree in which Dr. — possesses this faculty?" "Do you not think,

sir," I replied, "that he has either far too much of this faculty, or that he indulges it to a faulty excess?" H. "Yes, Sir, certainly: his mind seems to move on hinges, not on wheels. There is incessant motion, but no progress. When he was at Leicester, he preached a most admirable sermon, on the necessity of immediate repentance; but there were only two ideas in it, and on these his mind revolved as on a pivot."—pp. 118–122.

"The following are specimens of table-talk communicated by other friends.

"On the return of the Bourbons to France, in 1814, a gentleman called upon Mr. Hall, in the expectation that he would express himself in terms of the utmost delight on account of that signal event. Mr. Hall said, "I am sorry for it, Sir. The cause of knowledge, science, freedom, and pure religion, on the Continent, will be thrown back half a century; the intrigues of the Jesuits will be revived; and Popery will be resumed in France with all its mummary, but with no power, except the power of persecution." This opinion was expressed about six weeks before the issuing of the Pope's bull for the revival of the order of Jesuits in Europe, 7th August, 1814.

"A few years afterwards, Mr. Hall, on an allusion being made to the battle of Waterloo, remarked, "I have scarcely thought of the unfilled prophecies, since that event. It overturned all the interpretations which had been previously advanced by those who had been thought sound theologians, and gave new energy to the Pope and the Jesuits, both of whom seemed rapidly coming to nothing, as the predictions seemed to teach. That battle, and its results, seemed to me to put back the clock of the world six degrees."—p. 124.

"On being asked if he had read the Life of Bishop Watson, then (in 1818) recently published, he replied that he had, and regretted it, as it had lowered his estimate of the bishop's character. Being asked, why? he expressed his reluctance to enlarge upon the subject; but added, "Poor man, I pity him! He married public virtue in his early days, but seemed for ever afterwards to be quarrelling with his wife."

"He did not like Dr. Gill as an author. When Mr. Christmas Evans was in Bristol, he was talking to Mr. Hall about the Welch language, which he said was very copious and expressive. "How I wish, Mr. Hall, that Dr. Gill's works had been written in Welch." "I wish they had, Sir; I wish they had, with all my heart, for then I should never have read them. They are a continent of mud, Sir."

"John Wesley having been mentioned, he said, "The most extraordinary thing about him was, that while he set all in motion, he was himself perfectly calm and phlegmatic: he was the quiescence of turbulence."

"He spoke of Whitfield as presenting a contrast in the mediocrity of his writings to the wonderful power of his preaching: of the latter there could be no doubt, however; but it was of a kind not to be represented in writing. "it is impossible to paint eloquence."—p. 125.

Some other specimens of his conversation are given in "Tait's Magazine."

"When Dr. Gregory carried him Dr. Parr's renowned 'Spital Sermon,' he hastily turned over the leaves, greatly amused by the cursory examination. 'What a profusion of Greek, Sir! Why, if I were to write so, they would call me a pedant; but it is all natural in Parr. What a strange medley, Sir! The gownmen will

call him *Farrago Parr*.' When his eye fell at last upon the notes which refer to his own Sermon on *Modern Infidelity*, his countenance underwent the most rapid changes. 'Poor man! poor man!' he exclaimed, throwing down the book in pity, 'I am sorry for him. He is certainly insane, Sir! Where were his friends, Sir? Was there nobody to sift the folly out of his notes, and prevent its publication? Poor man!' We must set the learned Doctor right with such of the public as may not see these notes. They are generally highly complimentary; but even the *Whig* Dr. Parr saw and hinted at inconsistency between the opinions of the 'Apology for the Freedom of the Press,' and those of the Sermon on Modern Infidelity; and hence, probably, the extreme sensitiveness of Hall. Of Dugald Stewart he had a slighter opinion than that commonly *adopted* in Scotland. 'He is,' said Hall, 'a feeble writer. I would never compare him with any of our great metaphysicians, — with Malebranche, or Locke, or Berkeley, or even with Tucker. Reid had a more original and vigorous mind than Stewart; and Campbell, I suspect, was superior to both. There is also too much egotism and pride about Stewart. He is always polishing away at the corner of a subject; but he could not rear a system of his own.' He, however, admired Stewart's style."

"Though Hall was himself a man of high and warm imagination, and brilliant fancy, his truly noble mind sympathized far more strongly with moral than with intellectual greatness. Hence his low opinion of Lord Byron, the idol of the day. 'I tried to read *Childe Harold*,' he said to a friend, 'but could not get on, and gave it up.' 'But, Sir,' replied the friend, 'independently of the mere poetry, it must be interesting to contemplate such a remarkable mind as Byron's.' — 'It is well enough, Sir, to have a general acquaintance with such a character; but I know not why we should take pleasure in minutely investigating deformity.'

"When some one admired Madame de Staël's 'flights of fancy,' Hall said, 'He could not for his part admire her flights, for to him she was generally invisible; not because she ascended to a great height above the earth, but because she invariably selected a foggy atmosphere.' This lady, it may be remembered, was almost worshipped by his friend Sir James Mackintosh. Of the powers of that celebrated person, with an allowance for the natural partiality of early friendship, Mr. Hall appears to have formed a true and penetrating estimate. 'I know no man,' he said emphatically in conversation, 'equal to Sir James in talents. The powers of his mind are admirably balanced; he is defective only in imagination;' and, by imagination, Hall appears to have understood originality, power, invention. At his statement of the defect of imagination, his friend expressed surprise; remarking, 'That he never could have suspected that the author of the eloquent oration for Peltier\* was

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\* "Dr. Gregory notices that Sir James, in this defence, draws liberally upon his friend's Sermon on Modern Infidelity, and the remark is quite just."

deficient in fancy.' Hall replied, 'Well, Sir, I don't wonder at your remark. The truth is, he has imagination, too; but with him imagination is an acquisition rather than a faculty. He has, however, plenty of embellishment at command; for his memory retains every thing. His mind is a spacious repository, hung round with beautiful images; and, when he wants one, he has nothing to do but reach up his hand to a peg and take it down. But his images are not manufactured in his mind: they are imported.' Mr. Hall believed the genius of his friend, Sir James, essentially metaphysical, and Mr. Balmer expressed admiration of some of his philosophical papers in 'The Edinburgh Review'; his article on Madame de Staël's 'Germany,' and on Dugald Stewart's 'Preliminary Dissertation,' among others; yet said there seemed a *heaviness* about them, and that Mr. Jeffrey could expound a metaphysical theory with more vivacity and effect. 'With more vivacity, perhaps,' returned Hall; 'but not with equal judgment. He would not go so deep, Sir. I am persuaded, that if Sir James Mackintosh had enjoyed leisure, and had exerted himself, he could have completely outdone Jeffrey, Stewart, and all the metaphysical writers of our time.'

"Though Hall was himself fond of metaphysical studies, he felt their barrenness and inutility. A friend observed to him, that, admitting those studies did not terminate in profitable discoveries, still they were advantageous as a field for cultivating and invigorating the mental powers. Mr. Hall's ready reply was characteristic of his acuteness and brilliancy, and also of the soundness of his understanding. 'An arena,' he says, 'not a field. Metaphysics yield no fruit. They are not a field. They are only an arena, to which a man who has got nothing to do may go down sometimes, and try his skill in intellectual gladiatorship. This at present is their chief recommendation.' His favorite authors were such as discovered, on abstract subjects, 'subtlety, depth, or vigor of thought.' In this class he placed, we are told, the late Jeremy Bentham; for whom he entertained the highest estimation, as an original, profound, and accurate thinker; observing that in the particular province of his speculations, the science of legislation, he had advanced to the limits of reason; and that if he were compelled to legislate for the world upon uninspired principles, he should take Bentham, and go from state to state with as firm a step as though he walked upon a pavement of adamant."

"Hall was, indeed, a brilliant and powerful *talker*; combining the strength of Johnson, with a vigor of imagination peculiar to himself. The few scattered sentences we have still to give, show something both of his mind and his manner. Some one remarked, in his hearing, that compliments are pleasing truths, and flatteries pleasing untruths. 'Neither,' said Hall, 'are pleasing to a man

"Of this work, so favorably reviewed by Sir James Mackintosh, Hall entertained an almost contemptible opinion, having discovered that the authoress spoke of a well-known idealist as an opponent of the ideal theory, and, from thence, inferring her ignorance of German philosophy."

of reflection; for the falsehoods in this case so nearly assume the semblance of truth, that one is perplexed to tell which is actually given; and no man is pleased with perplexity.' Of compliments, he also often said, 'Two and two do not make four, and twenty and twenty fall far short of forty; deal not, then, in that deceitful arithmetic.' "

"Of a penurious person, a friend said, 'Poor wretch! you might put his soul into a nut-shell.' 'Yes, Sir,' replied Hall, 'and even then it would creep out at a maggot-hole.'

"On being asked if Dr. Kippis was not a clever man; Hall said, 'He might be a very clever man by nature, for aught I know; but he laid so many books upon his head that his brain could not move.' Disgusted, on one occasion, by the egotism and conceit of a preacher, who, with a mixture of self-complacency and impudence, challenged his admiration of a sermon; Mr. Hall, who possessed strong powers of satire, which he early learned to repress, was provoked to say, 'Yes, there was one very fine passage in your discourse, Sir.' 'I am rejoiced to hear you say so, — what was it?' 'Why, Sir, it was *the passage from the pulpit into the vestry.*'

"In confessing that he had been led into the folly of imitating Dr. Johnson, he said, 'I aped Johnson, and I preached Johnson, and, I am afraid, with little more of evangelical sentiment than is to be found in his essays; but it was a youthful folly, and it was a very great folly. I might as well have attempted to dance a hornpipe in the cumbrous costume of Gog and Magog. My puny thoughts could not sustain the load of the words in which I tried to clothe them.' In speaking of Johnson himself, he said, 'He shone strongly on the angles of a thought.'

"But Mr. Hall had a higher style of conversation, in which fancy, playfulness, and point were laid aside, or made subservient to the inculcation of some great moral lesson. To a clergyman who, from evil habit, had become fond of brandy and water, to an extent that involved his character and his peace, Mr. Hall, by a premeditated effort, when the brandy-bibber asked for the favorite beverage, replied, 'Call things by their right name, and you shall have as much as you please.' 'Why! don't I employ the right name? I ask for a glass of brandy and water.' 'That is the current, but not the appropriate name; ask for a glass of *liquid fire and distilled damnation*, and you shall have a gallon.' The poor man became pale, and seemed struggling with anger. 'But,' says Hall, 'knowing I did not mean to insult him, he stretched out his hand and said, "Brother Hall, I thank you from the bottom of my heart;" and from that time he ceased to take *brandy and water.*' "

We will subjoin but one more specimen of his conversation. In 1824, Hall declared, that "he never looked into the Eclectic or any Review." "We are doomed," he said, "to receive our first impression and opinions of books from some of the wickedest, and others of the stupidest of men; men, some of whom have not sense to write upon any subject, nor others honesty to read what they

pretend to criticize, yet sit in judgment upon all performances, and issue their ignorant and foolish oracles to the public."

It does not appear what Hall at this time thought of his own reviews, or in which class he ranked his friends, Sir James Mackintosh and John Foster, or such reviewers as the present Lord Chancellor, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, and the Rev. Sidney Smith, or Sir Walter Scott, Mr. Southey, Bishop Heber, or Mr. Bowring, or where he would probably have placed Mr. Macaulay. For the occasional intemperance and extravagance of his language, both in writing and conversation, his physical infirmities, affecting even his mind, afford an excuse which no one can hesitate to admit. But we must distinguish between what is to be excused and what is to be praised; and in Hall's conversation, truth seems sometimes to have been sacrificed to a passionate, perhaps brilliant, expression of temporary feelings.

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[Translated from the "Journal des Savans," for December, 1832.]

ART. VI. — *Translation of several principal Books, Passages, and Texts of the Vedas, and of some Controversial Works of Brahminical Theology.* By RAJAH RAMMOHUN ROY. Second Edition. London. 1832.

Few works combine so many claims to the attention of those who devote themselves to the study of the religion and philosophy of the Hindoos, as this collection of translations of certain portions of the Vedas, and of controversial works by the celebrated Bramin, Rajah Rammohun Roy. That a Bramin should travel and go to England, to publish an edition of works, written by himself, and designed as an attack on the Hindoo polytheism, is a circumstance so singular, that it may well excite wonder in those, who, knowing the difficulty of inducing the Hindoos to renounce their ancient opinions and adopt those of Europe, have believed that this change could never be brought about. It must be allowed that Rammohun Roy is the most distinguished Bramin who has been led to embrace European opinions, by intercourse with the enlightened men, to whom, from the first, has been entrusted the administration of the government, established by the English in India. But he certainly is not the only one on whom our systems have exerted a salutary influence; and when Sir William Jones, in his zeal for the study of Sanscrit literature, took lessons of the Bramins Radhacantadeva and Servoroutrivedi, he took the first step towards forming a more intimate connexion between Europe and India, and taught his successors how to render it lasting and advantageous. When an Englishman became the disciple of a Bramin, the Hindoos could scarcely fail to acknowledge in those

who governed them, a sincere desire to acquaint themselves with the institutions, usages, and opinions, to which India has, for ages, faithfully adhered. And, on the other hand, the view of that complicated social organization, and that vast system, in which religion, laws, and manners, respectively derive support from their close union, enabled the English to estimate the causes of its continuance, and convinced them, that time, which had hitherto maintained, alone could modify or destroy it. If this connexion has secured to India the preservation of her religion and laws, England owes to it her continued possession of India, and to the learned throughout Europe, it has afforded the means of studying this remarkable country, in the monuments of her literature; for the Bramins have not been slow to become the disciples of those, who had first consented to receive instruction from them; and the numerous works in Sanscrit and Bengalee, whose printing they have superintended at Calcutta, prove their eagerness to profit by European improvements, and to communicate their literary treasures to the West. A sentiment like that of which they had been the object, curiosity, soon led them to study our arts and sciences. A knowledge of the English language, spread among them; and a learned Bramin, Rammohun Roy, who writes it with great ease, felt a desire to become acquainted with Hebrew and Greek, in order to read our sacred books in the original.

Rajah Rammohun Roy was born about 1780, at Bardwan, in Bengal, of a noble family of Bramins. His education commenced in his father's house, where he learned Persian. After studying logic and arithmetic, at Patna, in Arabic translations of Aristotle and Euclid, he went to Calcutta, to acquaint himself with the sacred language of the Bramins, the Sanscrit. In 1804, or 1805, the death of his father and two brothers left him master of a considerable fortune. He settled at Mourshedabad, where his ancestors had resided, and began his literary career, by a work in Persian, with a preface in Arabic, "Against the Idolatry of all Religions." The boldness of his principles excited both the Hindoos and Mahometans against him, and he felt obliged to withdraw to Calcutta, where he took up his abode in 1814. After some years, he was appointed Collector of the public revenues, in the Presidency of Bengal. The duties of his office obliged him to learn English, which he was soon able to speak and write with remarkable ease and elegance. He also applied himself to Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and acquired sufficient knowledge of the two last languages, to be able to quote, in his controversial pieces, the original texts of the Old and New Testaments. From that time, he devoted himself with the greatest zeal to the accomplishment of the task which he had undertaken, a reformation in the worship of the Hindoos, and the propagation of Theism. The object of his numerous publications, was to establish the existence of one, eternal, infinite God, who requires of his worshippers no homage but the





Jeffrey



#### ART. IV.—LORD JEFFREY AND THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.

*Life of Lord Jeffrey, with a Selection from his Correspondence.*

By Lord Cockburn, one of the Judges of the Court of Session in Scotland. In 2 Vols. Edinburgh.

**T**HE young glories of the "Edinburgh Review" have become matter of history. The time is past when it enjoyed such a monopoly of popularity among periodicals that a satirist (himself a Londoner) introduced Gifford complaining that

"So stupid the people are grown,  
They really prefer Scotch Reviews to their own."

It is not merely that years and reflection have brought men to form a more correct estimate of the talent or genius displayed in the "Review:" in fact the old original "Edinburgh Review" has nearly been forgotten. Its tone, materially "modified" (as Lord Derby might express himself) before Jeffrey resigned the editorial office, has since entirely changed. Be the alteration for better or for worse, the "Edinburgh Review" of our days has scarcely anything in common with the "Edinburgh Review" which was (literally) kicked into the street by the Earl of Buchan, and which first taught Byron to write poetry by putting him in a passion. Of that "Edinburgh Review" the far greater part of the existing generation of the reading public knows nothing. They have enough to do to keep themselves *au courant* of the perennial stream of periodical literature; they have neither leisure nor inclination to study its antiquities.

The life of Jeffrey by Lord Cockburn will affect very differently two different classes of readers. Those who are old enough to have been contemporaries of the "Edinburgh Review's" days of novelty, freshness and petulance, will feel themselves carried back to an era of literary productiveness and power, in comparison with which the present appears to them tame and commonplace; to the times when poems by Byron, Moore, Wordsworth and Crabbe, and novels by Edgeworth, and Maturin, and Godwin, and Scott, were issuing in rapid succession from the press; when Sharon Turner, Hallam and Mackintosh in the department of history, Malthus, Ricardo, Mill and Bentham in that of mental and economical science, Jeffrey, Southey and Hazlitt in criticism, were in the fulness of their productive vigour. The works of these writers were caught up with an avidity of which a generation gorged since childhood with cheap and useful publications can have no conception. As yet railroads were not, but the rivalry for "mail-coach copies" was intensely eager. Poems and works of prose, fiction or imagination, and the two reviews,

went off in editions of ten, twenty, thirty thousands in a few days. The eagerness with which their publication was looked for, the impetuosity with which the public scrambled for them, rivalled the enthusiasm of the crowds which in the time of the Peninsular war blocked up the streets of every provincial town, when day after day mail-coaches, with flags proudly flying, brought news of battles fought and won. The intense vitality aroused throughout the whole British community by the country's great internecine duel with Bonaparte seemed to communicate itself to the national intellect and imagination as well. In politics, science, poetry, art, it was a period of feverish animation in which men achieved what in moods of sober health would have been beyond their power.

For the younger generation who are separated from the latest of these days by a gulf of some twenty or thirty years—who have been too intent upon reform-bill and anti-corn-law agitations, upon the labours of a society for the diffusion of useful knowledge and other promotions of cheap, useful literature, to have time or interest to spare for what occupied the minds of their predecessors, the life of Jeffrey will present much that is obscure. The epoch of his literary activity is already too remote to admit of its story being told by mere allusions to persons, incidents and controversies, of which by far the greater part of the living public know nothing; and yet so many of the actors in these scenes survive, that delicacy checks the communicativeness of the biographer. The minute and garrulous diligence of a Pepys or a Boswell is needed to impart fulness and characteristic resemblance to the personal history of authors and their associates; and nothing short of a Boswell's placid, self-complacent, obtuse, utter incapacity to feel or suspect that his gossiping revelations violated the sanctity of domestic seclusion, could enable any man to publish a work like his so soon after the death of his hero.

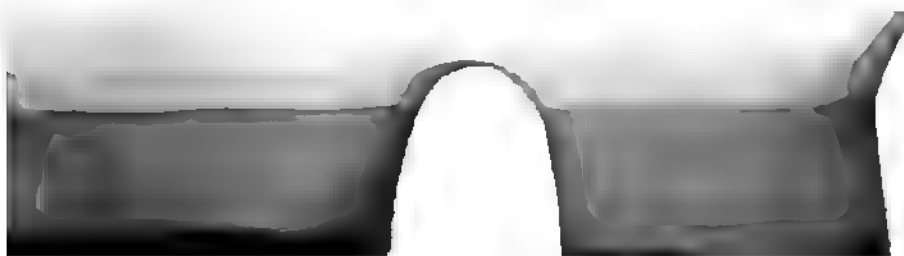
The literary history of Jeffrey and his contemporaries labours under another disadvantage, in addition to this of its being too remote for living interest, too near for the unrestricted communication warranted by the disappearance of all from this mortal scene, whose feelings might be hurt by too faithful a record of their sayings and doings. It is a local, a provincial history—the history of a literature which, though possessing a distinct character of its own, was in a great measure a parasitical plant rooted in the great literature of England, and deriving sap and nourishment from it. It wants breadth and completeness in itself, to interest the reader not prepossessed in its favour by local relations.

And yet there is a peculiar and piquant flavour—racy of the

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soil from which it sprung—about the Scotch, or more properly the Edinburgh school of literature, that would render a history of it—confined within moderate limits—curious and attractive. The nationality of Scotland long survived the Union. It had laws and a great legal corporation, a church and a system of universities and parish schools, an electoral system, in short a complete civil organization within itself, entirely different from that of England, and of which the mainsprings all centered in Edinburgh. Edinburgh therefore continued to be a capital in so far as the domestic affairs of Scotland were concerned, though denied all participation in the great imperial movements of the state into which it was incorporated. It had its own *noblesse de la robe*, was the residence of the most active and influential leaders in the church courts, had a university in which the young aspirants to admission among the said *noblesse de la robe* and into the church were trained, and upon which a flourishing school of medicine had been engrafted. There was enough of active business in Edinburgh to develop high practical talents, and enable men to acquire considerable fortunes. The gentlemen of the learned professions afforded a substitute for the Scotch aristocracy who had followed the court to London; they were indeed many of them cadets of that aristocracy, and some of its least affluent members still lingered among them. The rising manufacturers of Scotland had seated themselves in the west and the north-east; they came not near Edinburgh. The intellectual and social tone developed in such circumstances suggested some racy sketches to Smollett in his "Humphry Clinker," and has been turned to rich account by Scott in his novels. Additional illustrative matter is scattered through the "Lockhart Papers," the letter-press attached to the collected works of Kay, the Edinburgh caricaturist, and the biographies of various literary celebrities of "Auld Reekie." It is essentially Scotch with a strong tinge derived from the English literature of the age of Queen Anne on one side, and from the French literature of the Voltairian era on the other. Hume, Smith and Black, are men who have given a new impulse and direction to the science both of their own and other countries; but apart from them the *littérateurs* of Edinburgh have been mainly characterized by a certain acuteness and shrewdness, a carefulness of finish rather priggish than elegant, and by the narrowness of range and inclination to dogmatize inseparable from a provincial literature. The preponderating influence of the church and the law tended to aggravate these characteristic defects. The social tone of Edinburgh was not much unlike its literature. The puritanism of its ministers and their kirk sessions, and the pedantry of its lawyers, rendered it formal; pride of pedigree, the absence of

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mercantile enterprise, and addiction to literary pursuits, imparted to it an aristocratic dignity and chivalry; the prevalent narrowness of the citizens' incomes perpetuated a considerable amount of slatternliness in their domestic arrangements and tavern indulgences; and the recalcitration of independent minds and tempers against the rigid domination of the kirk was apt to degenerate into defiance of all decorum.

Such was Edinburgh, literary and social, from the time of Duncan Forbes to the close of the eighteenth century; the age of Scott, Jeffrey and Chalmers, was a transition era. Influences were then at work which have gone far to eliminate the peculiar features of Scotch society, and assimilate it more closely to that of England. The mercantile and manufacturing classes have risen in wealth and influence; doctrines of mercantile law, and forms of legal procedure adopted from England, have modified or superseded great part of the old law of Scotland; the internal struggles of the kirk have shaken it from its supremacy; the Reform Bill of 1831-2 has revolutionised the political relations of Scotland. The records of the period during which these changes were elaborating is a curious chapter in the intellectual and social history of Scotland. The materials for this chapter still lie in a great measure scattered and dispersed. Already, however, some valuable contributions to it have been made patent to the public. The most recent are the "Life of Jeffrey," by Lord Cockburn, and the "Memoirs of Chalmers," by his son-in-law, Dr. Hanna. These, together with Lockhart's "Memoirs of Scott," which have now been some ten or twelve years common property, afford various curious peeps into the literary activity of Scotland during the first half of the nineteenth century; the social relations from which it took its direction and peculiar character; and the changes it has wrought in public opinion and sentiment. Scott, Jeffrey, Chalmers, have achieved a reputation, their writings have exercised an influence beyond the limits of their own country; but to understand the men and their works thoroughly they require to be viewed in connexion with the society of which they formed a part.

The biographer of Jeffrey possesses some high and rare qualities for the performance of the task that has devolved upon him. For half a century he was intimately associated with the hero of his narrative—his friendly rival in the contest for professional distinction—the loved associate of his hours of relaxation—the faithful partner of the political proscription of his earlier, and the political triumph of his later years. Henry Cockburn has been endowed by nature with talents and qualities to which a certain constitutional indolence has perhaps prevented him from doing full justice. Of a cordial and affectionate disposition; seeing through the characters of men with an in-

tuitive sagacity; capable of reasoning clearly and tersely on all practical questions; gifted with an earnest, impressive, pathetic eloquence in his graver moods, with an unsurpassed play of quaint, grave humour in his merrier; no man could be better qualified to know and portray Jeffrey, as a distinguished man can only be known and portrayed by the discriminating love of a kindred mind; by one who shrinks not from telling the whole truth, but always in a reverential and affectionate spirit. An exaggerated tone of provincial patriotism—partly sincere, partly affected—in which Lord Cockburn is pleased to indulge when expatiating on the merits of Edinburgh and Jeffrey, is rather a recommendation than otherwise. It adds to the interest of his book, while there is no difficulty in making the due allowance for prepossessions so frankly and ostentatiously avowed. But a reluctance to reawaken old grudges and angry feelings has led Lord Cockburn to dismiss with a mere allusion, some passages in the political career of Jeffrey which were necessary to a full understanding of the man and his time. And possibly anxiety to preserve the due stateliness and dignity of a Lord of Session has prevented Lord Cockburn from recording some characteristic traits of the society of which Jeffrey formed the centre, which no one could have done more felicitously, had he seen fit. Lord Cockburn's ability to sympathise with, and participate in, the *abandon* of the social hour, when men's characters display themselves most truly, cannot be doubted by anyone who will turn to his exquisite sketch of that most grotesque of lawyers, John Clark. But all his other characters—Sir Henry and Sir James Moncrieff, Sir James Gibson Craig, &c., if they partake—as has not unjustly been said of them—of the weighty sagacity of Clarendon, partake also of his skilled diplomatic reserve. The personages, in short, who figure in the pages of Lord Cockburn are always arrayed in their drawing-room attire, and speaking and acting with drawing-room punctilio. Yet they could and did unbend—in a manner, it might be, as Samuel Johnson did at the Mitre; and Lord Cockburn could have told something of their “high-jinks” without derogating from their characters. Sydney Smith understood this when, on his last visit to Edinburgh, he insisted upon carrying a party of ladies to one of the few remaining parlours with sanded floors, below the level of the High-street, in which oysters were still consumed, in order to show them how Jeffrey and he enjoyed themselves when as yet the “Edinburgh Review” was not. A hint, for example, at the close of one of Jeffrey's letters to Mrs. Rutherford—“M'Bean has just renewed his wig, and looks as young as a viper who has just cast his enamelled skin”—might have recalled to Lord Cockburn's recollection a characteristic scene of “weel

timed daffin," in the gorgeously ornamented drawing-room of an ambitious and rising W. S.

The truth is that, grave or gay, Lord Cockburn deals too much in abstractions and generals to convey a perfect or satisfactory notion of what Jeffrey was. Jeffrey's writings are almost as much below his real powers, as we learn from Boswell that Johnson's were. Even the speeches delivered by Jeffrey on important occasions—or what he and his friends deemed such—are insufficient to explain his really deserved reputation for subtle, and brilliant, and vivacious ingenuity. Whether writing or speaking, conscious effort shackled his genius, or led him to smother it beneath a superfluous load of redundant verbiage. His very letters to those of his correspondents with whom he felt most at ease, are not altogether free from this latter defect, though they contain many delicious indications of the real Jeffrey. He did most justice to himself in familiar conversation, or while pleading some case in the courts of law, to which he attached little importance. On such occasions he gave the reins to the spontaneous flow of his thought and fancy; and the result was inimitable. The secret of this peculiarity—through which it came that he was great on unimportant occasions, and too often the reverse on great occasions—is sufficiently apparent from Lord Cockburn's narrative.

The life of Jeffrey falls naturally into three divisions:—the preparatory stage, during which he was educating himself, from his birth in 1773, till the appearance of the first number of the "Edinburgh Review" in 1802; the stage of successful effort and growing reputation from 1802 till his resignation of the editorship of the review in 1829; the stage of comparative failure in official life, embracing the close of his career. In the first of these stages we find him animated by a precocious ambition of literary distinction, incessantly reading and writing; reading books so numerous and so various as to indicate the absence of a preponderating taste or talent for any one special field of intellectual effort; writing so unintermittingly that the development of the faculty of expression advanced far before the development of the powers of thought. The consequences of his inversion of the natural order in the unfolding of his mind, may be traced throughout the whole of his after career. He never thoroughly mastered any one branch of knowledge. He originated no new opinions, or trains of thought. His mind had no power of setting itself in motion, or choosing its own course; it required to be impelled by the suggestions of some book, some cause given him to plead, some topic started in conversation. To such suggestions both intellect and fancy responded with amazing promptitude and exuberant fertility. His perceptions, though

not deep, and embracing no wide scope, were quick and clear. He readily apprehended isolated propositions, devised lucid and striking expressions of them, and illustrated them by copious analogies. As a critic he was unsatisfactory, from his inability to attain to first principles, or combine them into a system. His mind, preoccupied by theoretical formulæ, devised while his powers of expression were yet in advance of his powers of thought, was almost impervious to the thoughts and images presented in the writings of others. His reviews of poets in particular are little more than ingenious expositions of certain preconceived canons of taste and condemnations of all that is inconsistent, or that he believes to be inconsistent with them. There is much that is plausible, or even true, in his reviews of Scott, Wordsworth, and others; but it is in general quite irrelevant to the poems ostensibly under consideration. It might have been said with equal propriety *à propos* of any other poem, and has no bearing on the merits or demerits of the one he professes to be criticising. He controverted the theories of poetical criticism enounced in the prefaces of Wordsworth, Southey, or Coleridge, as he would have controverted the opinions expressed by any preceding speaker in the Speculative Society, simply as an exercise of dialectic ingenuity. Their poetry—or the poetry of any of his contemporaries but Crabbe—he does not appear to have felt or understood, or made any effort to feel or understand. Where he has to deal with the works of systematic thinkers, like Bentham or Stewart, or with an abstract principle, like Parliamentary Law Reform, he is equally at sea. He throws out a number of brilliant and ingenious thoughts, but never arrives at any definite or satisfactory conclusion. His best reviews are those in which he has to deal with novels, the scene of which is laid in domestic life, with books of travel, memoirs, and collections of letters. He is then able to expatiate, untrammelled by the necessity of establishing a principle; and he goes on, pleased himself and pleasing others, throwing out innumerable just and striking remarks on social usages and maxims, and innumerable playful and beautiful images. He was, in fact, better qualified for becoming a graceful and instructive essayist, in the manner of Steele or Addison, than for playing the part of a critic. Two things only prevented him from attaining to the felicity of these writers—the cumbrous and inappropriate form of the review, assumed by his essays, and the habit of indulging in verbiage, contracted by his precocious habits of incessant composition.

The same qualities which characterised his writings pervaded his forensic and colloquial efforts, were there more perfectly appropriate, and even contributed to the success and efficacy of the former. The business of the advocate is to present the case

of his client in as plausible a shape as his client would do for himself were he able. He has no abstract principle to discover or establish: he has to take for granted some maxim of positive law, and so to arrange and state his facts, that his dialectic skill may be able to convince the judge that it is applicable to them. Distinct conceptions leading to clear expression, habits of neat and perspicuous arrangement, a tenacious memory to retain the maxims of the positive law, and the statutes or judicial decisions in which it is contained, an extensive and varied range of not very profound general knowledge to supply apt and pleasing illustrations, self-possession and ready command of language—these are the requisites of the forensic orator. And all these Jeffrey possessed in an eminent degree. His knowledge of law could not be said to be either profound or systematic, but the tenacity of his memory was inconceivable. He never forgot a case, judgment or statute, that he had once examined. When an agent addressed him suddenly in the Parliament House about any cause to which his attention had not recently been turned, he might hesitate for a moment, but the mention of one precedent recalled all the rest, and he was immediately as much *au fait* of the question as if he had just risen from studying it. A sound practical judgment, and a habitual dexterity in making the most of what he knew, enabled him to turn his desultory and incomplete acquaintance with the law of his country to better account in pleading than many sounder and more learned lawyers. In aid of these qualities came his talent for lucid narrative, the range of illustration which his extensive miscellaneous reading had supplied, a light natural grace of thought not the less piquant that it sometimes bordered on flippancy or petulance, above all, an intense vitality that seemed to pervade his whole being, making his ideas as they arose more like realities than their types. His redundant vocabulary was here rather an advantage than otherwise. The first word that offered itself was caught at, then another that seemed more appropriate was allowed to let fall, a third or even a fourth might be suggested. Every additional word presented its corresponding idea in a new and clearer light; the auditors felt their apprehensions grow more distinct along with those of the speaker; they were enlisted as associates in the process by which he was clearing up his own ideas. They insensibly and unconsciously adopted his ratiocinations, and while following his lead appeared to be working out his conclusions as their own. Their judgments were fascinated, enthralled, led captive. The same witchery pervaded his social conversation, the only difference was that, as a pleader, while pleasing he was still more convincing, as a companion he pleased more than he convinced.

This very peculiar conformation of intellect and fancy was combined with a disposition almost feminine both in its beauties and its faults. The exquisite moral purity that animates all the writings of Jeffrey pervaded his conversation also. He shrunk from grossness like a fine-minded woman. Allied to this was a lively sympathy and delicate regard for the feelings of others. His sense of what is just and honourable was rigorous, his benevolence large. All these are qualities in which women are generally found to excel; and he combined with them that love of pleasing, sometimes seducing into flattery, that is characteristic of the sex. But he had also much of their irresolution and disposition to be guided by more robust, though not more elevated or worthy natures. This weakness is apparent in his early correspondence about the Review, where he frequently apologises for something that has appeared in it as the result of his compliance with the wishes of some impetuous contributor against his own better judgment. It kept him through life rather an ornament than a leader of the political party to which he attached himself; a kind of constitutional chief placed in the van by his colleagues when they wished to make a good appearance, and treated in the eyes of the public with the utmost deference, though in fact he had received his cue from these same deferential gentlemen behind the scenes. This infirmity of purpose, confirmed by advancing years, became painfully apparent after he entered upon official life, and rendered that point of his career distasteful to himself, disappointing and even humiliating to his admirers.

As might be inferred from this analysis, Jeffrey enjoyed a twofold reputation. One was the result of personal knowledge and observation of his intrinsic qualities, his graceful vivacity, acute perceptions, playful fancy, purity, generosity, honour. It was just, and cherished sincerely and affectionately by all who knew him. The other was the result of his position; the not unnatural tendency of those who saw him only from a distance to attribute to him—the visible and permanent representative of the “*Edinburgh Review*,”—almost all its merits, as they held him responsible for all its faults. This Jeffrey of the wider public was a very different person from the real Jeffrey: a much more powerful and accomplished, but a much less amiable man. The intense love borne to him by his intimate associates, however, and the veneration with which his countrymen are accustomed to regard a successful barrister, came even here to stand him in good stead, and keep even the grim Eidolon of the “*Edinburgh Review*” as popular as the real Francis Jeffrey.

Yet properly speaking it was only as editor of the “*Edinburgh Review*” that Jeffrey was a public character—that his personality

must to a certain extent interest those who neither moved in his immediate circle nor lived in his day. It was therefore a sufficiently ludicrous, though not singular perversity, on the part of himself and Lord Cockburn, that they appear all along to have been rather ashamed of this connexion. When Jeffrey and his friends first projected the "Edinburgh Review," they were proudly resolute not to accept any pecuniary recompence for their labours. When the good sense of Sydney Smith convinced them that except as a fair commercial enterprise—proceeding on the principle that the labourer is worthy of his hire—the work had no chance, and that with good pay to contributors it must succeed, it was only after some misgivings and hesitation that Jeffrey condescended to become its salaried editor. Even so late as 1827 he appears to have been dubious whether his editorial character did not compromise his gentility. In that year he wrote to Lord Cockburn: "From the very first I have been anxious to keep clear of any tradesman-like concern in the 'Review,' and to confine myself pretty strictly to intercourse with *gentlemen* only, even as contributors. It would vex me, I must own, to find that, in spite of this, I have lowered my own character, and perhaps even that of my profession, by my connexion with a publication which I certainly engaged with on very high grounds, and have managed I think without dirtying my hands in any paltry matters." Like the bear-leader in "She Stoops to Conquer," Jeffrey would only allow his animal to dance to the genteelst of tunes. Strange that men who see no degradation in accepting a fee to plead the cause of a murderer or swindler whom they know to be guilty, should have such punctilio about accepting an honorarium for an unequivocally honourable exercise of their intellect! Jeffrey gladly demitted the editorial office to be made Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, and subsequently Lord Advocate; yet as editor of the "Edinburgh Review" he had a European celebrity and position; these legal dignities made him at most but a great man in his own country—not necessarily even there when some of the worthies are recalled to memory who held them before him.

As a mere conversationist Jeffrey's reputation must of necessity be local and ephemeral; even the fame of a successful advocate is of a subordinate and transitory nature. If his name is to survive, it can only be as editor of the "Edinburgh Review." The value of the aggregate numbers of that periodical issued under his direction must stamp his character. He cannot indeed claim credit for all the learning, all the ingenuity, all the original thought that may have appeared in its pages. But in addition to what respect is due to his own contributions, he is entitled to credit for the judgment evinced in the selection of con-

tributions, for the temper and tact evinced in keeping contributors together and at work, and for the general tone and tendency of the publication.

It is mainly upon its efficiency as an instrument for the diffusion of more liberal political opinions, and more enlightened and tolerant views in social ethics, that the permanent reputation of the "Edinburgh Review" must depend. And it is a curious fact—which can however be substantiated by reference to the list of Jeffrey's contributions at the end of Lord Cockburn's first volume\*—that politics were exactly what its editor least cared for. His comparatively few political articles are such productions on general principles as are delivered from Scotch chairs of moral philosophy. His analyses of books of travels, memoirs of French *philosophes* and their female friends, poems and other works of imagination, are of varied merit. His comments on men, and society and its phenomena, are always sparkling, always genial, often just and instructive. For the literary criticism of the "Review," Jeffrey is mainly responsible. That criticism has retained so little hold on the public mind that it is now scarcely worth while to canvass its merits deliberately. His own contributions in this department occupy a middle position between such blunders as Brougham's review of Byron's "Hours of Idleness," and Hazlitt's reviews of Leigh Hunt and Coleridge. Lord Cockburn asks, "What poet whom Jeffrey condemns continues a favourite with the public, except in the works, or in the passages, or in the qualities, which he applauds?" The only answer to this question is the fact, that not one literary man in a hundred can now tell you what Jeffrey's judgment of any of his poetical contemporaries was, and that his adverse criticism has scarcely retarded the establishment of the poetical reputations of the Lake poets, Joanna Baillie, and others whom he assailed. In literature, the "Edinburgh Review," even under Jeffrey, slowly and imperceptibly conformed to the taste of the age; it assuredly did not lead it.

In the department of political economy, the services of the "Edinburgh" are less equivocal. Horner grappled with the monetary question in the first number, and continued to mature and develop his views respecting it in those which followed, till he brought it before parliament. The work to which Peel applied a finishing hand in 1819 was begun, and far advanced, in the pages of the "Edinburgh Review." In such publications one good article calls forth many, one sound and judicious con-

\* This list is very inaccurate. it omits articles which we have reason to believe were Jeffrey's, and contains some which we know were not his—as, for example, the reviews of "Rimini," and Coleridge's "Biographia Literaria"—both written by Hazlitt.

tributor attracts kindred minds. The contributions of Malthus, Mill, and (though at a considerable distance from the other three) of M'Culloch, have rendered the "Review" more instrumental in diffusing sound views of political economy than any contemporary publication.

Its services have been equally marked in what may be called the Exeter Hall class of topics, with one exception. The manly sense and deep-thoughted humour of Sydney Smith, and the impetuous, versatile, dazzling genius of Brougham, were devoted from the beginning to the promotion of general education and the abolition of slavery and slave-trade. The cause of Joseph Lancaster, of unsectarian education, of the education of the poor, was maintained by the former against the Mistress Trimmers of the day, with calm, crushing, laughing power. The atrocities of slavery were indignantly exposed. Nor was all the humanity of the writers in the "Review" reserved, as has too often been alleged with truth of the friends of the negro, for those only who had the good luck to be born with black skins. Sydney Smith's advocacy of the cause of the young chimney-sweeps, and his denunciations of spring-guns and man-traps, were among the first attempts to apply a rational reflecting humanitarianism to the minor morals of life. The one exception to the sympathies of the "Review" with Exeter Hall, above alluded to, was in its merciless, unjust, and indiscriminating attacks upon Methodists and missionaries. This topic would be in place in a review of the memoirs of Chalmers. Here it may suffice to allude to the anomaly that puritan Scotland should have given birth to a periodical which perhaps more than any of its contemporaries was inaccessible to the devotional sentiment; and of which all the earlier ecclesiastical articles were imbued with the hard worldly views of those members of the Anglican church who stand equally remote from the fanciful semi-Romanism of the modern High Church and the spiritual zeal of the Low.

In matters of science, physical and metaphysical, the "Review" was respectable, without being distinguished. Neat and correct mathematical articles, by Playfair, were interspersed with, or followed by, the somewhat presumptuous sciolism of Brougham, and the turgidity of Leslie. The earlier numbers contained rather more than enough of able, but too technical articles on medical and chemical subjects. Their authors, however, were dissatisfied with the liberties which the editor took with their contributions, in order to render them more generally palatable, and drifted off one by one to special scientific periodicals. In geology and natural history generally, the "Review" did little more than chronicle the commencement of the increased interest taken in these subjects in England. Its metaphysics

were those of acute and independent minds, who had little or no acquaintance with what had been written respecting them except by authors of the Scotch school. In historical inquiry, the contributions of Hallam, Allen, Macintosh, and Macaulay, imparted to the "Review" the charms of their graceful and genial, though superficial and inexact school. The "Edinburgh" rather lagged behind the age in recording the progress of geographical discovery; the provincial position of the editor rendered it difficult for him to compete against the "Quarterly," which had access to the department of government under which English discoveries were prosecuted. Classical literature was emphatically the weak side of the "Review;" as, indeed, of Scotland. In Jeffrey's private letters, he is constantly desiring his correspondents to obtain for him a good contributor on such subjects; but he never succeeded in getting anything better than some hard plodding investigator of particles, and scanner of measures, whose dry raw material he was obliged to serve up with the sauce of some elegant irrelevancies of his own.

The merits of the "Edinburgh Review" as an instrument of political enlightenment remain to be considered. At the time when it was started there was literally no liberal party in Scotland. A man might have counted the avowed Whigs on his finger. The forty-five Scotch members of the House of Commons were elected by less than five thousand titular landowners and self-elected town councillors. The whole executive power and political patronage of Scotland was vested in a clique of lawyers in Edinburgh, allied to the aristocracy, and thoroughly drilled tools of Lord Melville. The republican principles of the French Revolution had made converts in Scotland; but they belonged for the most part to the lower orders, and their few allies among the wealthier classes were destitute of political power. The extent to which the people were identified with the kirk, by the Presbyterian parity and poverty of its ministers, and its lay eldership, retarded the progress of opinions associated with lax and sceptical religious principles. The contagion of European example, however, precipitated by discontents arising out of an oppressive militia system, gave occasion to associations and movements of the disaffected, which the compact discipline of the predominant political party crushed easily, and trampled down with the relentless inveteracy of fear. The defeated malcontents assumed the usual characteristic of a proscribed sect,—unreasoning ferocity. The young projectors of the "Edinburgh Review" were disgusted by the panic-inspired ferocity of the conquering, and the revengeful ferocity of the defeated. Their politics were of an abstract, eclectic, criticising character. Their isolation from numerous and organized sympathisers, and their provincial situation, remote

from the great centre of political activity, perpetuated this character. But Sydney Smith soon returned to his native country, and was speedily followed by two of the most energetic of the reviewers, Horner and Brougham. The sympathies of the literary and fastidious Edinburgh reviewers were more in unison with those of the aristocratic English Whigs than of any other section of politicians. The success of the new periodical had attracted the notice of the Whig leaders. Its contributors, who had migrated to England, were gained mainly by the skilful caresses of Holland House, and the political intelligence supplied from head-quarters to the provincial editor came thus to be mainly distilled through the medium of the Holland House coterie. The principal channels of communication were Horner and Brougham, two men of diametrically opposite characters, between whose inspirations Jeffrey seems to have stood not unlike Macheath between the clamorous urgencies of Polly and Lucy. Now the massive, well-balanced mind of Horner—amenable to discipline, and sympathising with the Romillies and Macintoshes—carried the day; now the impulsive impetuosity of Brougham, who, to the horror and dismay of Holland House, coquetted at times with Major Cartwright, Bentham, and the Westminster Rump, carried Jeffrey along with him. But in the main, the “Review” became essentially a Whig organ, the retailer of the *dilettante*, epicurean liberalism of Holland House. In this character it was confirmed by the opposition of the “Quarterly Review,” established to counteract its Whiggery, and at a later period by the secession of the more stern and systematic political thinkers christened “educated Radicals,” by Blackwood, who established the “Westminster Review.” The great defect of the politics of the “Edinburgh Review” consisted in their being made up of vague, amiable sentiments, rather than of definite opinions or measures. This very defect, however, rendered the “Review” a more useful agent of liberal propagandism during the first twenty or thirty years of the century than any work advocating more definite principles could have been; especially in Scotland. There, at that time, no man dared to avow popular opinions: to do so closed against him all prospect of advancement at the bar or in the church, and even excluded him from pecuniary assistance by the banks if he were a merchant or manufacturer. But a number of influences were silently at work undermining the servile spirit generated by these circumstances. The growing wealth of the trading community inspired a sturdier temper, which essayed its young powers in assaults upon the close system of local municipal government. The abuse of patronage in the *Kirk* gave birth to a strenuous opposition in the church courts, organized and led by energetic practical men like Sir Henry

Moncrieff and Andrew Thompson. A few of the better spirits at the bar preserved a proud independence, and endeavoured to resuscitate the defunct Whig party. The very vagueness of the politics of the "Edinburgh Review" encouraged these sectional and local Liberals to avow their assent to them. The "Review" thus became a magnet to attract and hold in combination all the straggling and partial liberalisms of Scotland. The habit of reading it, and taking pride in it as a publication which did honour to their country, insensibly reconciled to its politics many adherents of the dominant party. The whole country became thus by degrees leavened with a leaven of liberalism, vague indeed and indefinite, yet sufficiently strong and pervading, when circumstances had disunited and weakened the old Tories, and when a matured practical measure of Parliamentary Reform was held out, to rally around it, in an enthusiastic spirit, nine-tenths of the population of Scotland.

To speak of the "Edinburgh Review," as was at one time customary with its partisans, as the great enlightener of the age, is simply absurd. The function of the reviewer is to be the medium of communication between the thinkers of his age and the busy public. It was fortunate for the "Edinburgh Review" that it sprung into existence at an epoch of intense national intellectual activity. The part taken by England in the great European struggle between innovating philosophy and old establishments, had kindled a preternatural excitement in the public mind. In this mood men were called upon to discuss practical questions of vital moment in politics and economics. The Catholic Question, the Bank Question, and many others, necessitated a recurrence to first principles in political and economical science. The rapid progress in physical inquiry which had preceded the French Revolution, continued with unabated energy and success. The intellectual, warlike, and political struggles of the age, awakened its imagination as well as its intellect, and called into activity a band of poets of rare and diversified excellence. The "Review" became the interpreter between the contemporary master-minds of England and the masses. It brought their reasonings and utterances of impassioned imagination to the knowledge of many who might otherwise never have heard of them; it accelerated their communication even to the literary portion of society. It acted as a fly-wheel to quicken and increase the power of the action of the intellectual machine. And though much was due to these circumstances, much also was owing, no doubt, to the men by whom the "Review" was conducted. Lord Cockburn disparages unduly the Reviews of an earlier date. But publications which had numbered among their managers and contributors Smollett, Goldsmith, Gifford, Taylor of Nor-

wich, and many more of their stamp, were by no means the contemptible things he is pleased to represent them. The "Edinburgh Review" surpassed them less on account of the superiority of those who laboured upon it than of the better materials placed within its reach, and the more favourable circumstances in which it appeared. Its utility was much diminished by the unacquaintance of its contributors with any modern literatures except those of France and England. It is, in consequence, an imperfect record of the European literary and scientific activity of its age. But it accomplished much for English literature, and breathed a liberal, enlightened, tolerant spirit into the dead political corporations of Scotland. For this, much credit is due, no doubt, to the raciness of Sydney Smith, the reckless eccentricity of Brougham, the solidity of Horner, the precision of Mill, the learned bonhommie of Hallam and Macintosh. But without the cementing influence of Jeffrey these heterogenous natures could never have been kept working harmoniously together.

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#### ART. V.—THE TENDENCIES OF ENGLAND.

1. *A Sermon of the Perishing Classes in Boston: August 30, 1846.*  
*A Sermon of the Dangerous Classes in Society: January 31, 1847.* By Theodore Parker. Boston.
2. *Labour and other Capital: the rights of each secured, and the wrongs of both eradicated.* By Edward Kellogg. New York, 1849.
3. *London Labour and the London Poor.* By Henry Mayhew. 1851.
4. *The Rich and the Poor.* By Henry Mayhew. (Letters in the "Sunday Times," May, 1851.)
5. *The Leader.*
6. *The Christian Socialist.*

THE *Reforms* at which England has aimed in the last thirty-six years, have been honestly denoted by this name. They have endeavoured to alter not the essence, but only the form of institutions,—to regenerate, not to re-create. They have visibly effected great results for the middle classes, and have undoubtedly warded off terrible sufferings from the lowest. But inasmuch as there is in England a vast body of persons that live on daily and





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THE  
WESTMINSTER  
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ART. I.—*Contributions to the Edinburgh Review.* By Francis Jeffrey, now one of the Judges of the Court of Session in Scotland. Second edition. London, 1846.

ALTHOUGH we have taken for our text the title of this work, we have no intention of offering a critical estimate of the whole, or of any large portion of its contents. The time for such an operation has gone by; caprices of literary taste are for the most part as transient as they are frequent; and although many books on their first appearance meet with undeserved civility or neglect, yet the treatment they ultimately receive is commonly, at least, when uniformly courteous, very fairly proportioned to their merits. The character, therefore, established by writings, some of which have been before the public for nearly half a century, and which, after being collected into four stately volumes, speedily reached a second edition, may be reasonably presumed to be not less just than favourable; and it would now be as superfluous to dilate upon the elegance and ingenuity displayed in them, as it would be invidious to qualify that praise by more than gently hinting that they are more remarkable for grace than vigour, and for speciousness than depth. Instead, however, of either confirming or questioning the reputation of their accomplished author, we ought rather, perhaps, to commence by apologising for having cited him to appear before us at all. As quondam president of a court of concurrent jurisdiction with our own, he might seem to be exempt from our supervision; and we are

aware, that in reviewing, with the intention of reversing, one of his most carefully considered decisions, we are stretching our authority to the utmost. There are occasions, however, on which official etiquette ceases to be paramount, and when the forms of law must yield to the requirements of justice; and certainly irregularities, of whatever kind, never stand so little in need of excuse as when they are committed in the cause of outraged Beauty, than whom, we hold with the poet—

“Nought is there under heaven's great hollowness  
That moves more dear compassion of the mind.”

It is this fair being whom Lord Jeffrey, in the first and most elaborate of his collected essays, has made the victim of judicial oppression, not merely aspersing her character and disputing her most valuable properties, but absolutely denying her existence, and pronouncing her to be the mere creature of a deluded imagination. The sympathies of our readers will surely be with us while we proceed to set aside this iniquitous decree, and to vindicate the fair fame of the divinity who strews the path of life with flowers, at once delighting and refining the mind, and who, in return for her favours, requires no painful homage nor irksome ceremonies, but careless of being revered, asks only to be loved.

What beauty is,—why certain objects are distinguished by the epithet of beautiful,—are questions, which though among the earliest to exercise the speculative ingenuity of philosophers, have, we think, been treated with as little success as any in the whole science of metaphysics. None, at least, have given rise to more wild and fantastic notions. The only affirmative proposition to be found in the dialogue on the subject, of Socrates with Hippias, is this recondite one—that beauty is that by which all beautiful things are beautiful. St. Augustin seems to have believed that beauty depends on the unity of an object, or on the harmonious combination of its several parts. Crousaz maintained that it is resolvable into five elements: to wit, variety, unity, regularity, order, and proportion. Dr. Hucheson liberally bestowed on mankind a sixth sense, specially adapted for the perception of beauty, which, according to him, depends upon the combination of variety with uniformity. Burke condescended to amuse himself and others, by representing beauty as the power of producing a relaxation of the nerves and fibres so as to occasion a degree of agreeable languor. Diderot gravely asserted it to be the power of an object to suggest ideas of relation between itself and other objects; and Sir Joshua Reynolds, who ought to have more accurately discerned the nature of what

it was the business of his life to contemplate, stoutly maintained that familiarity breeds not contempt but admiration, and that things are considered to be beautiful in proportion as they are common. On these and some similar speculations we can bestow only a slight allusion. Most of them bear with them their own refutation, and their unsoundness has moreover been pleasantly exposed by Lord Jeffrey. From them, therefore, we pass at once to the doctrine which his lordship would establish in their place; and of which, though it must be acknowledged to be as plausible as some of the others are extravagant, we are nevertheless constrained to affirm, that with all its ingenuity and brilliancy of illustration, it will be found, when closely examined, to be scarcely less opposed to the truth than the least orthodox of those for which it is proposed to be substituted.

According to Lord Jeffrey, whose theory is in great measure composed of materials supplied by Mr. Alison, "Beauty is not an inherent property, or quality of objects at all, and does not depend upon any particular configuration of parts, proportions, or colours," but consists entirely in the power which certain objects possess of reminding the beholder of pleasing emotions which have been previously experienced by him, and have become associated in his mind with such objects. Objects are beautiful "merely because they possess the power of recalling, or reflecting the emotions of which they have been the accompaniments," or with which they have become in some other mode connected. Consequently, "no object can be beautiful in itself, or could appear so antecedently to our experience of direct pleasures;" and beauty, far from being inherent in an object, must be an attribute with which we have ourselves endowed it: is nothing more, in fact, than a creation of our own minds unwittingly transferred by us to an object with which, but for ourselves, it would have had no connexion. Moreover, "as an infinite variety of objects may suggest interesting ideas and feelings, all of them might acquire the title of beautiful although utterly diverse and disparate in their nature, and possessing nothing in common but this accidental power of reminding us of past emotions." To the inquiry, what are the mental emotions the suggestion of which produces the perception of beauty, it is replied—All emotions whatsoever which are either agreeable when experienced by ourselves, or attractive when observed in others. Nay, it is added, that as the remembrance of our own past pain is often agreeable, and as the spectacle of the endurance of pain by others is generally interesting, so objects may become beautiful from their connexion even with painful ideas. As to the nature of the connexion between beautiful objects

and the ideas or emotions from which they derive their beauty, it is observed that objects are beautiful,

“First, when they are the natural signs and perpetual concomitants of pleasurable sensations; or at any rate, of some lively feeling or emotion in ourselves, or in some other sentient beings; secondly, when they are the arbitrary, or accidental concomitants of such feelings; or thirdly, when they bear some analogy or fanciful resemblance to things with which those emotions are necessarily connected.”

There is some ambiguity in this exposition, owing to the mode in which sensations, emotions, and ideas are spoken of, as if the three were convertible terms, but Lord Jeffrey's meaning becomes clearer as he proceeds. That he advances many ingenious arguments and apt illustrations in support of his theory, will be readily believed; but plausible and attractive as it has been rendered by its skilful contriver, we fear that no part of it will bear the test of close examination. Some of its propositions appear to us to be unqualified fallacies; and whatever truth may lurk in the rest, can scarcely be extricated from the tissue of error with which it has been elaborately interwoven. After carefully considering all that is urged in opposition to our own opinion, we remain convinced, and we hope to convince our readers, that beauty is invariably dependent upon form, proportion, or colour; that it is in many instances inherent, and that the associations from which it is in other cases derived, are quite different from those referred to by Lord Jeffrey. His lordship's ill-success in investigating the nature and origin of beauty is, indeed, little surprising if, as we imagine, he has completely mistaken the tokens by which its presence is manifested. He considers the gratification afforded by it to consist principally in pleasures of memory, which, as shall immediately be shown, proceed from a widely different source; and it is no wonder that his researches have failed while his attention has been withdrawn from the proper class of phenomena.

Undoubtedly a large portion of the pleasure we derive from the appearance of a beautiful object consists of the agreeable recollections which it awakens; but this sort of pleasure is neither the whole of what the spectacle affords, nor is it the effect of the *beauty* of the object. The sight of a rose may transport us, in fancy, to the pleasant garden in which it was gathered, and open to us glimpses of shady walks, velvet lawns, and variegated parterres; or may remind us of the tresses which we have seen adorned with such a flower; or may possibly assist us in living over again the happy hours we have spent in company with the fair owner of those tresses. But all these images and recollections might have been equally presented to us by a flower less beautiful

than a rose, or by a withered rose which had lost the whole of its beauty. It cannot, then, be the beauty of the rose which affords us this intellectual enjoyment, since another object possessing less, or even altogether destitute of beauty, might have prompted the very same reflections. When seeking for the origin of any phenomenon, we must not flatter ourselves that we have discovered its cause, if it be obvious that the effect would remain, even though the assumed cause were removed.

So, when we have before us a common English landscape,—green meadows dotted with sheep and cattle, and watered by a purling stream,—well-tilled fields bordered by tufted hedges, and neat cottages half hidden in trees and scattered round a hill topped by a decent church,—we seldom fail to be agreeably affected by the scene. Much of our gratification, too, is doubtless derived from the picture of human happiness which the mind is assisted in forming—from the appearances of comfort and content, of the industry by which those blessings are insured, and of the simplicity by which they are contrasted with the bustle of a city life; and our delight is perhaps heightened by the dreams in which we are led to indulge “of those primitive or fabulous times when man was uncorrupted by luxury and ambition, and of those humble retreats in which we fondly imagine that love and philosophy may find an unpolluted asylum.” But it is not the beauty of the scene that leads us into these reflections; most of them might have occurred to us as forcibly in situations in which the eye of taste would find nothing to admire—in a well-stocked farmyard or in a productive kitchen-garden. We might there have found the same evidences of successful industry; the same signs of plenty, temperance, and health; and the same excuse for amusing ourselves with the belief that such peaceful spots must be the favourite retreats of innocence and purity. Or, if we exchange this quiet landscape for one of a more romantic character, where we have “lofty mountains and rocky and lonely recesses, tufted woods hung over precipices, lakes intersected with castled promontories, ample solitudes of unploughed and untrodden valleys, nameless and gigantic ruins, and mountain echoes repeating the scream of the eagle and the roar of the cataract,”—here, too, when we have somewhat recovered from the impression by which we were at first overpowered, and can pause to analyse our feelings, we shall find that much of the delight with which we are filled proceeds from the new and elevated course into which our thoughts have been directed. But we shall also find that the reflections which occur to us do not originate in the beauty of surrounding objects. The idea of “the Mighty Power which piled the massive cliffs upon each other, and rent the mountains

asunder, and scattered their giant fragments at their base," would be not less forcibly presented to us if, instead of appearing in such various and picturesque shapes, the features of the landscape were all regular geometrical figures. There would be nothing to please the eye in a succession of cubes of the height of Ben Nevis, but the recognition of Omnipotence would be extorted as irresistibly by such rectilinear masses as by a mountain range of the most charmingly irregular outline; nor would the comparison be less naturally suggested in the one case than in the other, between the weakness and insignificance of perishable man, and the firmness and durability of unchanging nature. When, from these works of God's own hand, we turned to the crumbling remains of artificial monuments, the sight of a shattered castle might probably call up visions of martial pomp, glittering processions, and triumphal banquets; but the vividness of such glimpses of departed glory would not be proportioned to the picturesqueness of the ruins on which we were gazing: we should obtain them as clearly from blank walls, like those of Kenilworth, as from the graceful turrets of Conway, or from an ivy-clad pile like that of Berry Pomeroy. Even without the aid of such memorials, our thoughts could scarcely fail to revert to the ancient inhabitants of the neighbourhood; but neither then would fancy be dependent on the beauty of the scenery. We should be equally apt to contrast their activity and turbulence with the stillness and desolation of the ground beneath which they lay interred; to call up the romantic ideas attached to their ancient traditions, their wild and enthusiastic poetry, and their gloomy superstitions, whether we wandered over the bare and boggy domains of the Macleods and Macleanes, in Harris and Mull, or gazed upon the blue waters of Loch Katrine from the woody side of Benvenue. In either situation, too, we should be equally disposed to sympathise with the actual occupants of such wild regions; to follow them in thought through the dangers, hardships, and enjoyments of their lonely huntings and fishings; to fancy them resting, on warm summer nights, in pastoral shielings on the mountain-side, or beguiling the dreariness of winter with tales and sports in their turf-built huts in the glen below. It is true that we should take much more delight in musing over the mode of life of a people dwelling amid cheerful and picturesque scenery, than of one settled in a spot devoid of such external attractions,—and only in the former case should we be disposed to dream of "romantic seclusion and primeval simplicity; of lovers sequestered in blissful solitudes; and of rustic poets and philosophers communing with nature, at a distance from the low pursuits and selfish malignity of ordinary mortals." Undoubtedly, in instances like this, our

thoughts are directly affected by the beauty of surrounding objects: great part of our pleasure consists of pleasant thoughts, which would not have occurred to us unless the landscape had been beautiful. We imagine that in such lovely spots it must be happiness to dwell, and we amuse ourselves by thinking how much the constant contemplation of their charms would cheer the various occupations, and heighten the various enjoyments of life. But is the landscape beautiful because it suggests such thoughts? Does it not rather suggest them because it is beautiful? Do the dwellers amid lovely scenery enjoy it merely because they imagine others would enjoy it, or because they themselves derive from it an independent, and so to speak, selfish pleasure? How could they suspect that it would please others, unless it had first pleased themselves? Is it not obvious that in such a case selfish enjoyment must precede sympathy? And if we imagine certain "blissful solitudes" to be peculiarly adapted for amorous dalliance or philosophic meditation, is it because we suppose that lovers would suddenly suspend their courtship, or philosophers descend from the heights of speculation, to think how satisfactorily others might woo or muse in the same place? Is it not rather because we perceive that, however we may be engaged, certain combinations of form and colour are agreeable to the sight, and that the pleasure we derive from their appearance heightens every other pleasure?

The reverse of this opinion is, however, maintained by Lord Jeffrey, who, even of the countenance of a young and beautiful woman, which in common with the uncritical vulgar he acknowledges to be the most beautiful object in nature, will not admit that either the form or colours have any independent attractions. He considers that what we admire is nothing more than a collection of signs and tokens of certain qualities which are universally esteemed and loved—of youth, health, innocence, gaiety, sensibility, intelligence, delicacy and vivacity. And he very pertinently asks whether, if the appearances which are actually significant of those qualities were commonly found in connexion with their opposites, we should not then regard them with aversion instead of rapture?—whether—if the smooth forehead, the firm cheek and the full lip, which are now so distinctly expressive of the gaiety and vigour of youth, and the clear and blooming complexion which indicates health and activity, were in fact the forms and colours by which old age and sickness were characterised—it would not be thought absolutely ludicrous to speak of the beauty of what was universally understood to denote decrepitude and pain? Still more confidently he inquires whether, if the smile which now enchants us as the expression of innocence and

affection were the sign attached by nature to guilt and malignity,—if the blush which expresses delicacy, and the glance that speaks intelligence, vivacity, and softness, were always found united with brutal passion or idiot moodiness, the whole of their beauty would not be extinguished, and our emotions at the sight of them exactly the reverse of what they now are?

All this is so strongly put, that we think it prudent to postpone our reply, and shall, for the present, only ask a few questions in our turn. Is there really nothing pleasing in the symbols of advanced age? Do we never admire hair that is thinly scattered and of a silvery hue, nor a lofty though furrowed brow, nor eyes whose brightness time has dimmed but not entirely quenched? Is it likely that Vandyke felt disgusted while painting the portrait of Gervasius?—or do we commonly turn away with horror from our acquaintances as soon as we perceive them to be tottering towards the grave under the weight of years and infirmities? Is not the richest bloom of health successfully rivalled by a hectic flush?—and is female beauty ever more exquisite than when it owes its delicacy to the deadly influence of consumption? Do we never speak of a beautiful face with a bad expression, nor discover sweetness among features which are undeniably plain? Does not a woman sometimes look all the prettier for pouting, though the fact of her doing so proves that she is not in the most amiable of moods? Is a straight nose esteemed more ornamental than a snub because it is distinctly indicative of some desirable property, physical or moral?—or can a similar explanation be offered of the preference universally accorded to raven and auburn hair over tresses of a fiery red? Unless these queries should meet with answers very different from what we expect, we may reasonably suspect that features which are commonly recognised as beautiful, possess a charm independent of suggestiveness; and we may, at any rate, refuse to believe that it is that quality alone which prevents our “preferring the richly-fretted and variegated countenance of a pimpled drunkard to the tame smoothness and comparatively poor colours of a youthful face.”

In attempting to analyse female beauty, Lord Jeffrey seems to us to have erred in consequence of comprehending under that term all the various attractions of a pretty face, without perceiving that those on which he lays most stress may exist where beauty is not present. A similar complication of ideas may be detected in his attempt to account for the beauty of spring. He asserts that winter has shades as deep and colours as brilliant, so that we must look elsewhere than to the accidents of mere organic matter for the sources of that vernal delight and joy which subject all finer spirits to an annual intoxication, and strike home the

sense of beauty to hearts that seem proof against it under all other aspects. It is, he thinks, the renovation of life to all animated beings, and the hopes and sympathies awakened in consequence, that constitute this annual jubilee of nature. And such are, undoubtedly, some of the conceptions forced upon us by the appearance of returning spring, and which contribute largely to render that season delightful; but that they do not constitute its beauty is proved by the fact that autumn, a season calculated to suggest ideas of a directly opposite and melancholy character, is very generally esteemed more beautiful still, and simply on account of the greater brightness and variety of tints of which Lord Jeffrey speaks so contemptuously.

So with regard to the beauty of childhood, Lord Jeffrey contends that the forms and colours peculiar to that age cannot be beautiful in themselves, because in a grown person the same forms and colours would be either ludicrous or disgusting, but that their charm really consists in their indestructible connexion with the engaging ideas of innocence, of careless gaiety, of unsuspecting confidence, of helplessness, of blameless and happy ignorance, and of parental solicitude. But it is not necessary that a child should be pretty in order to suggest these ideas. A plain child may be equally innocent, gay, confiding, helpless, and ignorant, and may fill a parent's bosom with the same hopes and fears. Besides, although a child's head on an adult's shoulders would form a very offensively incongruous combination, the face, if otherwise handsome, would not be rendered ugly by being misplaced. If a young fop were to use a pair of diamond earrings for his personal bedizenment, we should not think the diamonds had lost their lustre because we thought the man very silly for wearing them.

Lord Jeffrey, however, though he attaches much importance to the examples already cited, acknowledges that they are not altogether decisive. He admits that in those instances the conception of beauty appears to be inseparable from the appearance of the objects, and to be impressed in some degree upon all beholders, so that room is left for insinuating that it may exist independently of the reflections called up by the sight of the objects. But he says that there are other instances in which the perception of beauty is not universal, but entirely dependent upon the opportunities which each individual has had of associating ideas of emotion with the object to which it is ascribed; the same thing appearing beautiful to those who have been exposed to the influence of such associations, and indifferent to those who have not. Such instances would "really afford an *experimentum crucis* as to the theory in question;" and it must be acknowledged

that if any such instances could be found, they would fairly warrant the conclusion, not only that there is no such thing as absolute or intrinsic beauty, but that it depends altogether on those experiences with which it was perceived to come and disappear.

Let us, then, examine the proofs which Lord Jeffrey deems so irresistible. Taking again the example of female beauty, and observing what different and inconsistent standards would be fixed for it in different parts of the world, he demands whether, if there were anything intrinsically beautiful in any of the forms that distinguish it, it is conceivable that men would differ so outrageously in their conceptions of it? Whether, if beauty were a real and independent quality, it could possibly be strongly felt by one set of persons, where another set, altogether as sensitive, could see nothing but its opposite? And whether, if it were actually attached to certain forms, colours, or proportions, it could be likewise perceived in the most opposite forms and proportions in objects of the same description? If we were capriciously disposed, we might meet this bold challenge by remarking that there are qualities in matter which, though unquestionably inherent, do nevertheless differently affect different persons of equal sensibility. But we are far from asserting that female beauty is an absolute entity. We are ready to admit that it is almost entirely derived from association, though we, at the same time, maintain that it is inseparably blended with the forms and colours with which it has become connected. We shall have another opportunity of explaining how this fact is consistent with differences of taste in different men; and shall, for the present, be satisfied with showing that, whatever may be the nature of female beauty, it does not at any rate depend upon the power of suggesting ideas or exciting sympathies. If it consisted, as Lord Jeffrey supposes, in the visible signs of youth and health, gentleness, vivacity, and kindness, it is obvious that these qualities could not be discovered in any countenance which was not considered by the spectator to be beautiful. But surely, although an European might not admire the Hottentot Venus, he would not be so unjust as to call her old and sickly, as well as ugly. The elderly lodging-house keeper, whose gentleness as a nurse the philanthropic John Howard rewarded by making her his wife, is expressly declared to have had no pretensions to good looks; and kindness must have been depicted as clearly in the countenances, as it was evinced by the actions, of the negresses who afforded shelter and food to poor Mungo Park, when "the wind roared and the rain fell, and the white man, faint and weary, came and sate under their tree."

It seems unnecessary to dwell long on some other peculiarities of national taste alluded to by Lord Jeffrey; for his proposition, that "the style of dress and architecture in every nation always appears beautiful to the natives and somewhat monstrous and absurd to foreigners," is directly opposed to experience. Franks and Osmanlees agree in thinking the turban and loose robe far more becoming than the round hat and swallow-tailed coat. If we believed the scenery of Cumberland and Derbyshire to be unrivalled, swarms of English tourists would not annually invade the Rhineland, Switzerland, Italy, and the Tyrol; nor, proud as we justly are of Windsor Castle or Westminster Hall, are we blind to the merits of the Escorial, or of the Hotels de Ville at Bruges and Louvain. Neither, when we are moved, even to tears, by some simple ditty, which reminds us of childhood, do we pronounce it to be more beautiful than *Vedrai Carino*, because it has a more powerful effect upon ourselves. Lord Jeffrey must have been jesting when he so completely transposed cause and effect, as to say that white is thought a gay colour because it is used at weddings, and that yews are thought gloomy because they are planted in churchyards; and as for the majesty which he ascribes to large masses of powdered horse-hair shading the brows of bishops and judges, we will only remind him that the striking features of one of the most remarkable of living personages lost something of their ordinary dignity, when their owner was compelled, during a short portion of his chequered career, to crown them with a chancellor's wig.

Although, however, Lord Jeffrey's theory can derive little support from some of the examples just alluded to, he has brought forward some other illustrations, which must not be set aside without a more careful examination. He remarks that, besides diversities of national taste, there are differences of taste produced by differences of education or instruction, and that well-educated persons receive numberless impressions of beauty from objects that are utterly indifferent to uninstructed persons of equal natural sensibility. For instance, quoting an eloquent passage from the work of Mr. Alison, he imagines a tourist, well versed in classic lore, to have before him a city, meanly built for the most part, though containing several magnificent structures, and occupying an extensive tract of low ground, broken by a few insignificant hills and intersected by a muddy stream. He might not perhaps be altogether indifferent to the sight, but comparing it with the many more picturesque towns he had seen in the course of his travels, he would probably not be very much struck with the view. But if he should presently discover that it was Rome which lay before him—the ancient mistress of the

world, the glory of the whole earth, and the citadel of nations—then, indeed, a field of rich and solemn imagery would be presented to his imagination, on which he would continue to gaze with inexhaustible delight. This is true; but Lord Jeffrey and Mr. Alison appear to have misapprehended the real nature of the spectator's emotion. Rome, in being discovered to be Rome, had become infinitely more interesting, but had not grown likewise more beautiful. It must have affected the mind in the same manner whatever had been its external aspect. The mere knowledge that it was the scene of such splendid historical recollections would have sufficed to enable the fancy to revel in visions of the past. Emotions of precisely the same sort, and, in some instances, far higher in degree, would be experienced by the traveller who, journeying along the Syrian shore, and seeing some fishermen spreading their nets on a rocky headland, should reflect that on that desert spot once stood a city of unsurpassed grandeur, "whose merchants were princes, and whose traffickers the honourable of the earth;"—or who, among shapeless heaps of ruins on the banks of the Euphrates, should recognise traces of "the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency;"—or who, though in the gloom of a subterraneous crypt, should believe himself to stand on the site of the crucifixion. In this last case the idea of beauty is absolutely inadmissible; yet the mind receives an impression far deeper and more solemn, though of the very same kind, as, in the instance of Rome, was assumed to be the effect of beauty.

Lord Jeffrey, it is evident, has not distinguished between beauty and the quality to which, for want of a more euphonious designation, we must give the clumsy name of *interestingness*; but though the first is almost necessarily accompanied by the second, the latter may also exist independently. Grains of corn taken from the folds of an Egyptian mummy—loaves baked eighteen centuries ago at Herculaneum—a fragment of the true cross—are all exceedingly interesting; and the one last mentioned the source, to a devotee, of more rapturous delight than any other object that could be shown him: but although thus interesting, it would be a mere abuse of language to call them more beautiful than things of the same sort which any farmer, baker, or carpenter could supply. When Captain Cook's companions found in a remote corner of the globe a broken spoon, with the word "London" stamped upon it, they burst into tears; but it is not related that they thought the spoon which had so deeply affected them the prettiest they had ever seen. There is no man who has not some interesting associations with particular scenes or objects. The view of the house where he was born, or of the

school where he was educated, is indifferent to no one; but how much soever we may "love the play-place of our early days," yet if the house or the school be a formal red brick building, our partiality for it does not blind us to its intrinsic ugliness.

As for the influence of literary studies upon the feelings we receive from the contemplation of rural scenery, we must, in the first place, intimate our dissent from the opinion that children and uneducated persons are insensible to the beauties of nature. Boys permitted to ramble where they please, commonly prefer the river side, or the shady grove, or the steep upland, to the highway, and even to fields, however green and flowery, if undiversified by wood or water, or undulations of the ground: and the Constantinopolitan Turks, who at the maturest age are little better than children of a larger growth, always prefer, for the kiosks in which they love to smoke, sites commanding views of the unrivalled Bosphorus. As the mind becomes cultivated, the capacity for the enjoyment of scenic beauty no doubt increases; but though poets and other favourite authors contribute greatly to the formation of our taste, it is principally by directing special attention to points which might otherwise have been overlooked, or insufficiently noticed. It is certainly not by enabling us to people every fair landscape with the figures of ancient mythology, nor by reminding us of their own descriptions of similar scenes. It is not, perhaps, once in a thousand times, that a fine prospect suggests to us the idea of Diana and her nymphs, or of Theocritus or Virgil; and when it does so, how much soever our enjoyment may be enhanced in consequence, it is obvious that we have ceased to regard the realities before us, and are solely occupied with the visionary scenes to which we have been transported by the vigour of our own imaginations. But the delight we take in such mental excursions, is evidently quite distinct from admiration of the spot from whence the fancy took flight. That would indeed be a singular sort of admiration, which did not commence until we had ceased to regard its professed object, and had transferred our attention to something else.

While thus engaged in controverting the notion that beauty consists in the power of suggesting agreeable ideas or recollections, we have anticipated another of Lord Jeffrey's tenets, and we need not be detained by the inquiry, what sort of ideas are those which beauty suggests? Yet we cannot pass, without a few words of comment, the very startling proposition, that because it is often agreeable to recollect our own past sufferings, and because it is often interesting to witness the sufferings of others, therefore an object may be rendered beautiful by its association with

painful ideas. That we do really think with pleasure of pains that are past, is undeniable. *Meminisse juvat*, or as Cowley says,

“ Things which offend when present, and affright,  
In memory well painted, move delight :”

but it is obvious that we are pleased solely because the pains are past. We contrast former suffering with present ease, and exult in the improvement of our condition. Our pleasure is derived, not from the idea of pain, but from the consciousness of exemption from it. Even if this be disputed, and if it be contended that we actually delight in reflecting on the painful sensations to which we have been subject, we shall still be unable to admit that the objects which suggested those recollections are necessarily beautiful. A liberated prisoner, as he passes Newgate, may congratulate himself that he is no longer within its walls; but he does not fancy he perceives beauties in its architecture to which he was blind before his confinement. Neither does a cripple see anything to admire in the shape of the instrument with which his leg was amputated; nor a youth escaped from pupilage, in the cane under which he has so often smarted. We should apologize for urging such palpable truisms, if the assertion against which they are brought had proceeded from an authority less respectable than Lord Jeffrey,—who, however, goes so far as to affirm that we delight not only in the remembrance of our past, but in the anticipation of our future emotions, even though attended with great pain. This is utterly unintelligible. We can understand that when a schoolboy has been flogged, he is pleased to think his punishment is over; but if he look forward with satisfaction to being flogged again at some future period, all we can say is, that the fact is altogether inconsistent with our own experience, mental or bodily.

We have not yet disposed of all the examples cited by Lord Jeffrey in support of the opinion, that the beauty of an object consists in its suggestiveness. In the cases hitherto examined, the objects were supposed to have a direct and close connexion with agreeable or elevated ideas. Thus, a well-tilled farm might naturally remind us of rural simplicity and innocence; a mountainous landscape, of omnipotence; a pretty face, of gaiety and gentleness; and the sight of the ruins or sites of ancient monuments might fill the mind with historical recollections. But many objects are undeniably beautiful, which have no such obvious or immediate connexion with ideas of any sort. All mountains may suggest the idea of power: but of two mountains of equal size, one may be much more beautiful than the other, owing solely to

some variation in its form. Can it be that the superior beauty is attributable to some distinct idea connected with the diversity of shape? Lord Jeffrey appears to think that it does, though, upon this point, he has expressed himself with less than his usual perspicuity. If we understand him, however, he considers that objects may derive beauty from some analogy subsisting between themselves and other objects naturally suggestive of agreeable ideas. Thus, spring, the infancy of the year, is supposed to owe its principal charm to the resemblance which it bears to the infancy of man, and to inspire us in the same manner with a sort of fearful tenderness; and morning and evening are also considered to be beautiful, because typical of the dawn and close of human life. Upon which illustrations it seems sufficient to observe, that whereas all men admire the tints of spring, the brightness of morning, and the softness of evening, many exceedingly dislike the company both of children and of old people; and it is hard to understand how these, at least, can admire one thing because it reminds them of another which they regard with a feeling the reverse of admiration. There are other objects whose beauty Lord Jeffrey endeavours to explain, on the principle of "sympathy with human feelings," and which he asserts to be suggestive of certain mental qualities. Thus, in his opinion, the purity and transparency of air or water are universally expressive of mental purity and gaiety; the sunny gleams and fitful showers of early spring, remind us of the waywardness of infancy; flowers waving on their slender stems, impress us with the notion of flexibility and lightness of temper; all fine and delicate forms are typical of delicacy and gentleness of character; and almost all forms bounded by waving or flowing lines, suggest easy movement, social pliability and elegance; a lofty tower or a massy building, gives at once the idea of firmness and elevation of character; a rock battered by the waves, of fortitude in adversity. It is impossible to deny that there is some analogy between these several objects and the mental qualities respectively classed with them; but we suspect that we are much more frequently reminded of the former by the latter, than of the latter by the former—that we much more frequently transfer to mind the attributes of matter, than we invest matter with mental characteristics. We liken mental purity to the transparency of the air, but we do not speak of a frank and candid atmosphere. We complain of the willow-like fickleness of our acquaintance, but we never accuse the willow of indecision of character. We admire the rock-like stability with which a good man endures the storms of fate, but we do not give a rock credit for fortitude and patience. At any rate, if material objects are ever suggestive of mental qualities,

they are so only to persons of a more than ordinarily vigorous fancy, and very rarely even to them. A Greek or a Persian poet might discover hyacinthine locks and cypress waists among the tenants of the parterre or the grove; but only in his finest phrensy would he be likely to perceive in plants indications of human virtues, as well as traces of human forms; and assuredly the great mass of mankind habitually behold and admire tall trees and drooping flowers, without thinking for a moment of moral rectitude or feminine modesty. If there are any visible appearances which universally *suggest* ideas of human emotions, it is because they are likewise naturally *productive* of those emotions. Bright light is not agreeable, as Lord Jeffrey strangely says, because it reminds us of gaiety; nor darkness oppressive, because it is emblematical of sorrow. The converse of the proposition is the truth. We call light cheerful, because it makes us gay; and darkness melancholy, because it is apt to make us dull.

One other illustration of the theory we are endeavouring to refute, remains to be examined before we take leave of this part of the subject. Both Lord Jeffrey and Mr. Alison deride the notion that there is any independent merit in the proportions of Grecian architecture, the beauty of which, they say, arises entirely from considerations of utility, convenience, and fitness for the purposes of the building—of security and stability—of the skill and power required to mould the materials into forms so commodious—of magnificence, splendour, and expense—of antiquity, and of Roman and Grecian greatness. If this were the case, St. James's Palace would be as well entitled as Whitehall to be styled a handsome building, for it is as useful, convenient, and suitable for its purpose; it has been built as substantially, and at equal or greater expense; it has witnessed scenes of greater magnificence, and it can boast a seniority of more than a hundred years. Its sole inferiority is the absence of the classic associations arising from the use of a classic model; and save in this respect, and in antiquity, the warehouses of St. Katherine's Docks and Meux's brewery should also be placed by Mr. Alison on a level with Whitehall. Moreover, in comparing specimens of Grecian architecture, regard would be paid to utility alone. The Lantern of Demosthenes would, therefore, rank no higher than the octagonal Temple of the Winds at Athens; and the Church of the Madeleine at Paris, would be scarcely on a par with that of St. Pancras, or of St. George's, Bloomsbury. Mr. Alison's language seems to imply, that whatever style had been first adopted, the same would have become the standard of taste, for that the earliest durable structures would have been taken as

patterns by succeeding architects. Yet it does not appear that the treasury of Atreus furnished any hints to the founders of the Parthenon, and monuments of Grecian and Gothic art stand side by side in Italy, as well as in other European countries. If architectural beauty were dependent on historical associations, no building would be comparable for elegance to the Egyptian pyramids; and if suggestiveness constituted the sole recommendation of any particular style, it would be difficult to account for the instantaneous admiration with which the Taj Mahal at Agra, and the Jumma Musjeed at Delhi, invariably strike the European spectator who, until his arrival in India, can have seen nothing similar to either.

We believe that we need say no more to prove that the pleasure afforded by beauty is not purely intellectual; but when we intimate our suspicion that it is altogether sensual, we shall probably inspire Lord Jeffrey's disciples with a contempt which we are very far, indeed, from feeling for any of their master's opinions. In spite, however, of the scorn which we may incur, we shall venture to define the beauty of visible objects as the power which they possess of imparting an agreeable sensation to the eye. We must here distinguish between sensations and ideas. By the former we mean bodily feelings;\* by the latter, mental conceptions. Now, although a beautiful object may suggest agreeable ideas, we have seen that it will not do so by reason of its beauty; for another object, utterly devoid of beauty, might have been equally and similarly suggestive. The effect of its beauty will be merely to give pleasure to the sense of sight. If required to describe the pleasure to which we allude, we must at once confess our inability to do so, for it is impossible to analyze sensations. Ideas may always be expressed in words, but feelings never. We can only give instances of their occurrence. We cannot describe flavours or scents; the only means by which we can indicate their character is by likening them to other flavours or scents, as by saying that honey is sweet like sugar, or that orris-root smells much like violets; but precisely in

\* It may, perhaps, be objected to this definition, that sensations, as well as ideas, are mental phenomena, inasmuch as it is really the mind that feels as well as thinks, although, in the former case, she is merely a passive recipient of impressions from without—whereas in the latter, she is engaged in an active operation. The expressions in the text, however, seem to be sufficiently distinct and intelligible, especially if the reader be forewarned that wherever the eye and ear are spoken of as experiencing sensations, they are, nevertheless, to be merely regarded as the channels by which the mind maintains its communication with the external world.

"It is the mind that sees the outward eyes  
Present the object, but the mind describes."

the same manner as certain flavours are agreeable to the palate, and certain odours are agreeable to the sense of smell, so do we conclude that certain forms and certain colours are agreeable to the eye.

This doctrine may, perhaps, be less startling, if we pause to consider what is passing in our minds when we are engaged in the contemplation of beauty. While absorbed, for example, in admiration of a fine prospect, are we studying the composition of the picture, and carefully noting the mutual relations of its several parts? Are we observing how skilfully the tints of sky, earth, and water are blended or contrasted; or how the outlines of some bold cliff or gentle descent, some crumbling tower or slender spire, some umbrageous or tapering tree, affect the general character of the scene? The professed artist, indeed, may do this habitually, for it is his business; but it is not, perhaps, more paradoxical than true to affirm that his gratification is lowered in consequence; for instead of tranquilly enjoying the landscape, he is restlessly investigating the process by which it affects him. Not so the ordinary, unartistical spectator. He, too, may occasionally endeavour to trace his enjoyment to its source; but his ill-success will probably cause him, like Scott,\* to give way to unreasonable regret, on account of his inability "to dissect the various parts of the scene—to comprehend how the one bears upon the other," and to estimate the share of each feature in contributing towards the aggregate result. But this is a departure from his usual practice. In general, though he may specially distinguish points of extraordinary beauty, his thoughts do not rest upon them. He notices them, not otherwise than he might notice some peculiarly exquisite perfumes. It is only momentarily, if at all, that he thinks of the beauties which attract him. Nay, it is seldom that he continues long to think at all about the objects on which his eyes are fixed. In general, his mind flies off almost instantaneously to some distant spot, perhaps of a similar, but perhaps, also, of an utterly dissimilar character, where memory or hope enchants him with visions of her own. Perhaps to him, as to Lord Byron, it may seem that—

"Lochnagar with Ida looks o'er Troy."

Perhaps, like the author of 'Eothen,' he is transported to Windermere while gazing on the Sea of Galilee, and from thence conveyed to a snug fireside, or to a box at the opera, or to some other situation possessing no closer resemblance to the scene of the miraculous draught of fishes. Yet, while his thoughts are wandering widely from the spectacle on which he seems intent, he is nevertheless powerfully affected by its delightful influence,

\* 'Life of Scott,' second edition, vol i. p. 71.

for he cannot withdraw his eyes without reluctance, and when he does so, the brightness of the vision fades away: although, unconsciously, he has been keenly enjoying the beauty of the landscape. But in what way did it affect him? Of what description was the pleasure it afforded him? Not intellectual, for his thoughts were far away; the ideas which filled his mind were quite different from any that could be suggested by what he looked upon. But although the beauty which attracted his eye did not suggest, it coloured his thoughts. It forced them into a cheerful course, and diverted them from gloomy subjects. It enhanced his gaiety, or alleviated his melancholy. It affected him like sunshine or genial warmth, or like that sweet season, during which—

“The inmost heart of man, if glad,  
Partakes a livelier cheer;  
And eyes that cannot but be sad,  
Let fall a brighten'd tear.”\*

But it produced this effect by operating, not on the intellect, but on the feelings; and the pleasure it afforded must consequently have been not intellectual, but sensual.

“The science of mind may not appear to be much advanced by these responses;” but in this, as in all similar researches, we fear it is impossible to reach much further than the point attained by *Zadig, qui savoit de la metaphysique ce qu'on a su dans tous les ages, c'est à dire très peu de chose*. We shall not, therefore, admit that our theory is unsound, merely because it might occur to the most superficial inquirer, but shall proceed to consider what more weighty objections can be urged against it. Of these, “the first and perhaps the most considerable” is pronounced to be “the want of agreement as to the presence and existence of beauty in particular objects among men whose organization is perfect, and who are plainly possessed of the faculty, whatever it be, by which beauty is discerned.” An object which possessed the power of pleasing the eye, might be expected to please every eye, and if thought beautiful by any, to be thought so by all. Yet it is notorious that many persons, acutely sensitive to beauty, can discover nothing of it in objects in which it is distinctly felt and perceived by others of not greater susceptibility. The argument founded upon these diversities of perception would deserve more attention, if the same thing did not occur with respect to every bodily sensation whatsoever. “A Chinese or African lover might possibly see nothing attractive in a belle of London or Paris, and undoubtedly an *elegans spectator formosum* from either of those cities would discover nothing but

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\* Wordsworth's ‘Address to May’

deformity in the Venus of the Hottentots," but neither, perhaps, would an African or a Chinese greatly relish the dainties of an European table, and an English or French epicure would assuredly turn with disgust from a repast of fried worms and frica-seed rats. Now the flavour of food undoubtedly acts directly upon one of the bodily senses; yet the same flavour is liked by some and disliked by others, who are all equally possessed of that sense. In the former case an agreeable sensation is imparted to the palate, which the same cause fails to produce in the latter case. Yet the failure is not to be ascribed to insensibility. A person who cannot touch putrefying venison dines heartily on recently killed mutton, and justly appreciates the palatableness of all such meats as suit his peculiar taste. So likewise may a visible object differently affect the eyes of different spectators, by all of whom it is seen with equal distinctness. All equally perceive its form and colour, as all men can taste that sugar is sweet; but some may not recognise in it the beauty pointed out by their companions, just as those who are not fond of sweet things may say that sugar although sweet is not nice.

Another objection, esteemed of almost equal force, is derived from the prodigious variety of things to which beauty may be ascribed, and from the assumed impossibility of imagining any one inherent quality which can belong to them all, and at the same time possess so much unity as to pass universally by the same name. The form of a fine tree is beautiful, and the form of a fine woman—and the form of a column, a vase and a chandelier. But what, it is asked, has the form of a woman in common with that of a tree or a temple? So far as we are concerned, we might decline offering a direct reply to this query, for we have not asserted that beauty is a real property of objects. We merely believe it to be dependent on their real properties. We conceive it to be strictly analogous to the palatableness of food; and as this may be defined to be the power of imparting an agreeable sensation to the palate, so may beauty be described as the power of imparting an agreeable sensation to the eye. Now the power of pleasing the palate is possessed by substances having as little in common as the most dissimilar objects of sight. A palace, a waterfall, and a rainbow, are all beautiful, yet utterly unlike; but they are not more unlike than turtle, pine-apples, and champagne—all of which connoisseurs consider to be very nice things. They are all called nice, because dissimilar as they are in other respects, they resemble each other in the power of pleasing the palate; and in like manner the most dissimilar objects are classed together as beautiful, provided they possess the power of pleasing the eye.

In order, however, firmly to establish our theory, something

more is required than merely to answer the objections against it, and we have some additional affirmative evidence to offer in its support. Even while keenly enjoying a beautiful spectacle we are frequently, as we have seen, thinking of something in no way connected with it. Still it does frequently happen that the ideas which occupy the mind are those which the scene itself has suggested, and we have admitted that a great part of the pleasure afforded by the sight of beautiful objects, often arises from the agreeable ideas associated with them. But we have also endeavoured to show that those ideas are not the result of the beauty of the objects, inasmuch as other objects absolutely devoid of beauty might equally have suggested them. Objects destitute of beauty, however, can please only by suggesting ideas, whereas beautiful objects invariably please. They please, therefore, by virtue of an attribute peculiar to themselves; and this attribute (which may fairly be presumed to be no other than beauty), must, inasmuch as it does not address itself to the understanding, produce its effect by operating on some bodily sense. There are many tokens by which the physical sensation to which we allude may be distinguished from the intellectual emotions which accompany it. The latter are frequently after-thoughts. They are seldom, perhaps, precisely simultaneous with the first perception of pleasure, though they may follow it after a scarcely appreciable interval. They vary too from time to time, the same spectacle suggesting very different reflections on different occasions. They may possibly be deeply melancholy, though excited by beautiful objects; yet, in spite of the pain which is thus occasioned, the objects are always regarded with a certain degree of pleasure. This pleasure cannot be the effect of the ideas which occupy the mind, for these are assumed to be painful; and the mind cannot be conceived to be intent at the same moment upon two ideas, one painful and the other pleasurable. It may, however, while suffering from disagreeable reflections, be soothed by sensations received through one of the bodily organs, and this we imagine to be what actually occurs. Though conscious of the pleasure we are receiving, we strive in vain to analyze it. If it consisted of agreeable ideas, we should have no difficulty in discerning and describing its nature; but it is a sensation, and cannot therefore be expressed in words. Like all other sensations, too, the first acute enjoyment of it is exceedingly evanescent. The first draught of odour from a rose or a bunch of violets is so exquisite, that if it could be continued with equal zest, we should never have enough of it; but it is useless to persist in inhaling the scent. After a few moments the palled sense loses the keenness of its sensibility, and the flowers must be withdrawn for a

time before they can reproduce the whole of their original effect. Equally impossible is it to maintain at their height the pleasurable sensations derived from beauty. In vain do we endeavour to preserve them by fixing our attention upon them. They elude our grasp, for they are not appropriate objects of attention. The first thrill of delight is only momentary, and cannot be protracted by any effort of ours. But though the first enjoyment of beauty becomes so speedily blunted, we do not grow absolutely insensible to its influence, but continue to be agreeably affected by it as long as it remains present,—just as it is pleasant to sit in a room scented with clematis or mignonette, even when we are too busy to notice the perfume. So it is always pleasanter to have beautiful than ugly objects before our eyes, even though our thoughts are so fully occupied as to prevent our being aware that we are looking at them. If it were otherwise—if the gratification afforded by them depended on our giving them our active attention—the contemplation of beauty would be a toil instead of a pleasure, and would be perpetually distracting our thoughts or disturbing our repose. It would be difficult to study in a library garnished with showily bound books, or to rest on a couch of elegant design; whereas, in reality, in whatever manner we are engaged, we commonly prefer a richly adorned apartment to a room plainly and scantily furnished. Even if deep in meditation we should scarcely, unless we kept our eyes fixed on the ground, walk with precisely the same feelings through Pall Mall and Gray's Inn Lane, or through Hyde Park and Kennington Common; not because we should have leisure to compare the magnificence of the one with the meanness of the other, but because, although the eyes of the mind were closed to the external world, the eyes of the body remained open and admitted sensations which gratified us, without interfering with our intellectual labour.

Another strong proof that visible beauty exerts only a sensual influence, may be drawn from the changes in the beauty of objects—occasioned by material changes to which no distinct ideas can possibly be attached. The appearance of a shady grove is pleasing to all men, and part of the pleasure which the spectator derives from it may consist of the pleasant train of thought into which it leads him. According to his turn of mind, he thinks, perhaps, how suitable the spot would be for meditation, or courtship, or a picnic; and recalls his personal experiences of such pastimes, from whence he passes into other equally gratifying reminiscences. But all these suggestions he might have received from an ordinary grove, or from one composed of trees of only one kind, as of elms or oaks. Such a grove might

possess much beauty; but its beauty would be exceedingly augmented by a judicious intermixture of other trees, or by the removal of branches which prevented the stem of some particular tree from being seen, or by the placing of some old oak paling at the edge of the wood. Every observer of nature must be aware how amazingly the scene would be improved by these alterations: but would the improvement consist in increased suggestiveness? The grove would be in no degree better adapted for retirement, or for social intercourse, after some gloomy firs had been interspersed amongst the trees of a lighter green, nor because the wooden fence was left with its natural grey colour, instead of being painted bright yellow or sky-blue. Yet by these circumstances, with which it is impossible to connect any precise idea, the beauty of the scene would be materially affected. Or if, through the trees, we obtained glimpses of a commodious villa, we might probably amuse ourselves by thinking of the pleasantness of such a dwelling in such a situation, and our interest in the scene would be proportionably increased; but much as such an object might gratify the mind, the mere beauty of the prospect would be much more enhanced by the substitution for it of a ruinous hovel or cow-house,—not, of course, because the latter would suggest ideas equally agreeable, but simply because the colour of its tiles or thatch would harmonize better with the surrounding foliage than the blue slate and white stucco of the far more desirable mansion.

Our explanation of the nature of the gratification derived from beauty has, we trust, been sufficiently clear to absolve us from the suspicion of believing that a distinct sense or faculty, denominated taste, must exist for its perception. Instead of a distinct faculty, taste appears to be simply the capacity of any sense or faculty to receive an agreeable impression. To have a taste for the picturesque, for music, for poetry or oratory, or for field-sports, is to have the eye, the ear, or the mind so constituted as to delight in a certain class of spectacles, certain combinations of sounds, or certain intellectual or bodily exercises. Taste for beauty is not, however, the property of one organ only; for, as we shall see hereafter, beauty is of several distinct sorts, and each species is perceived in a mode peculiar to itself. Confining ourselves, however, for the present, as we have hitherto done, to the beauty of visible objects, we may define taste to be the ability of the eye to derive pleasure from certain forms or colours, or from certain combinations of them. Varieties of taste are merely preferences evinced by different persons for different appearances, as when one person prefers wild and romantic scenery or gaudy colours,

another, tamer landscapes and soberer hues. Similar preferences are exhibited by the palate, the organ which has already supplied us with so many apt illustrations. One man likes a peach better than a pine-apple; another likes a pine-apple better than a peach: one ranks claret and another champagne as the queen of wines. These preferences may be either natural or acquired. Many flavours which are disliked when new and strange become grateful when we are used to them. An old South Sea navigator relates that the New Zealanders who visited his ship could, at first, be scarcely persuaded to touch the highly-seasoned dishes set before them, but after a few trials, grew fond of the very things which their simplicity had formerly rejected. In some parts of Central Asia assafœtida, which no one ever swallowed for the first time without disgust, is greatly esteemed as a spice, and is much used in cookery. A veteran opium-eater is merely exhilarated by a dose of his favourite drug that would kill a horse; and people who practise what that impudent reprobate Wilkes used to despise as "small vices," are soothed by the tobacco-smoke that once made them sick. So painters who, instead of regarding nature, content themselves with studying the works of other artists, frequently become incapable of distinguishing between the beauties and the blemishes of their models; and thus it happens that not a few enthusiasts, whose visual organs do not seem to have been originally defective, are not merely reconciled to, but absolutely enamoured of, Mr. Turner's fantastic tricks of colouring. In such instances as these the senses become, by habit, adapted to impressions which were originally offensive. Sometimes, however, instead of being blunted, their sensibility is sharpened by being frequently subjected to a new class of impressions. A coal-heaver, admitted as a daily guest at the table of a prince or a peer as whimsical as the Caliph Haroun Al Raschid or the entertainer of Christopher Sly, would gradually grow dainty in his diet, and might at length prefer olives and claret to onions and porter. So must it have been impossible for the dullest Athenian, in the days of Pericles, to have lived constantly within view of the Parthenon without apprehending something of the graceful symmetry of its proportions. So Tom Purdie, Sir Walter Scott's rugged gamekeeper, by habitually turning his eyes in the same direction as his master, contracted, by degrees, some of his master's feeling. "When I first came here," said Tom one day to the factor's wife, "I was little better than a beast, and knew nae mair than a cow what was pretty and what was ugly. I was cuif enough to think that the bonniest thing in a country-side was a cornfield enclosed in four stane dykes; but now I ken the

difference. Look this way, Mrs. Laidlaw, and I'll show you what the gentlefolks likes. See ye there, now, the sun glinting on Melrose Abbey. Its no a' bright, and its no a' shadowy neither, but a bit screed of light, and a bit daud of dark yonder like, and that's what they ca' picturesque, *and indeed it maun be confessed that its unco bonnie to look at.*"\* Since London has been able to boast of a National Gallery, freely open to holiday visitors, many a heavy-eyed journeyman and gaping nursery-maid has learned to discriminate between a painting by Titian or Murillo, and a public-house sign; and those pioneers of art, the Italian image-boys, have greatly assisted in bringing the lower classes of our countrymen to a juster appreciation of elegant forms, by their gratuitous exhibitions in the streets and highways of Baily's *Eve*, and the *Graces*. Education improves taste, chiefly by directing the faculties to subjects peculiarly qualified to afford them gratification. Every sort of mental cultivation, all additions to our knowledge, every development of the affections, and every increase of imaginative power, do indeed make objects more interesting by establishing new relations between ourselves and them, but can scarcely render us more susceptible of beauty, except by stimulating us to more habitual and closer observation.

Hitherto our dissent from Lord Jeffrey's doctrine has been too wide to admit of compromise. What he refers to the intellect, we would refer to the senses. Our conclusions are separated by the broad barrier which divides thoughts from feelings. When, however, we proceed to another part of the subject and enquire, not how the power which we term Beauty operates, but how it originates, or from whence it takes its rise, the differences between us, though still exceedingly great, are not so absolutely irreconcilable. Lord Jeffrey appears to think that the beauty which a spectator perceives, results from his own experience, and has been by himself communicated to what he beholds; and this position would be incontrovertible if beauty were really the ability to awaken recollections,—for nothing but the spectator's own observation could have caused an object to be associated in his mind with particular reminiscences. We, on the other hand, contend that there are appearances in which beauty is inherent,—an opinion which we hope to be able to justify when we come to consider the beauty of colour. We admit, however, that the same remark is not applicable to beauty of form, of which it cannot be said that it pleases the eye simply because it is natural to the eye to be pleased with it.

\* Lockhart's 'Life of Scott,' vol. vii. p. 312—13.

Such was, nevertheless, the opinion of Hogarth, who composed his 'Analysis of Beauty' on purpose to establish the principle that the winding or serpentine line is the essence of all that is beautiful in nature or art; but it is singular that that daring genius, while looking around for examples to corroborate his theory, should have contrived to overlook many appearances which are quite inconsistent with it. A zigzag path leading across a perfectly level and open meadow would not be pleasing to the sight; neither would a column bent (if that were possible) into a curve instead of standing perpendicularly; for in these cases ideas would be suggested of needless toil or insecurity. The undulating line would seem, therefore, to be beautiful only in situations in which it is not inappropriate; whence it has been inferred that forms or shapes derive their beauty from a perception of their fitness for the purpose to which they are subservient, provided that purpose be such as may be contemplated with pleasure. Thus the forms of an antelope and a swan are supposed to be beautiful, because admirably adapted to the lively movements of those animals; while a pig's snout, though equally well contrived in its way, is pronounced ugly, because commonly employed in doing dirty work. But neither does this opinion appear to be strictly correct. There is nothing admirable in the shape of a common table-spoon, excellently suited, as it is, for its proper and very agreeable office. All windows of equal size admit equal quantities of light, but some are much more ornamental than others. A column will not be rendered stronger or more useful by being fluted and surmounted with a capital,—alterations which so greatly improve its appearance. A Saxon will serve as well, or better, than a pointed arch to support a weight, but is commonly thought less graceful. An English great-coat is quite as convenient as a Spanish mantle, but is not nearly so becoming. Beauty of form does really, in most cases, originate in a perception of utility, fitness, or convenience; but the process by which it is thence derived, far from being perfectly simple and obvious, seems to require a somewhat elaborate explanation to render it intelligible.

Ideas of agility, health, strength, and repose—of all qualities, in short, which contribute to comfort and ease—are pleasing to the mind, and the suggestion of them is accompanied by a sensation of satisfaction. By an easy transition, appearances which are intimately connected with such ideas, produce a similar sensation. They become, in fact, substitutes for the ideas, and affect the spectator in the same manner. Now, in animals, slenderness is observed to be conducive to freedom of motion; moderate sleek-

ness is indicative of vigour; and unconstrained attitudes imply cessation of toilsome effort. For these reasons we look with pleasure on the nimble antelope, on a race-horse in high condition, on a swan gliding through the water, and on the recumbent figure of a man; but are somewhat offended by the sight of a camel, or a hippopotamus dragging its awkward weight along—of a lean greyhound, a mangy cur, and of a soldier standing bolt upright at the drill-sergeant's word of command. In the former class of instances, the primary source of our pleasure is the association of the objects with certain agreeable ideas, but the objects do not always suggest those ideas. We might never have admired the shape of the antelope unless we had first remarked how well adapted it is to rapidity of motion; but having once made that discovery, we are not continually reminded of it by the sight of the animal. We often see an antelope without thinking of its fleetness, but we never see it without being pleased by its graceful appearance. The reason is, that the appearance has acquired the same influence over our feelings as the idea with which we formerly observed its connexion: it strikes the same chord within us and produces the same sensation of pleasure. It thus appears that beautiful forms, even when obviously conducive to convenience or utility, do not usually excite those ideas, but only the gratifying sensation which is their ordinary accompaniment. The effect is the same when the forms in question have no apparent connexion with utility. The delicacy of figure, the flowing outlines, the smoothness and flexibility, the unwieldiness, angularity, bareness, and rigidity which please or displease in living creatures, please and displease likewise in inanimate things. Sometimes, as in the case of animals, the secret of the influence of these appearances lies in their manifest appropriateness or inappropriateness, as when we notice the tapering height of a church spire, or compare a Thames wherry with a coal-barge, or a landau with a broad-wheeled waggon. But even when they tend to no apparent purpose, the same forms which please in animals, please also, unless manifestly misplaced, in inanimate objects. Swelling hills, sloping vales, rolling or fleecy clouds, slender columns, convoluted shells, trees, leaves, feathers, flowers, are all defined by outlines of which the spectator approves. He is gratified, however, not because the outlines seem conducive to any special design,—not because he can clearly perceive how their diversities assist the operations of nature, and can assign any particular reason why hills might not have had flat instead of rounded summits, why all trees might not have been of the same shape, and all leaves and shells of the same pattern,—but because the flowing lines and delicate proportions which have been observed to conduce to the comfort of animated beings, usually affect us, even when

noticed in inanimate things, in the same manner as the abstract idea of comfort, and excite within us the same feeling of satisfaction.

Beautiful forms do really then frequently owe their charms to their original connexion with utility and convenience, but the connexion need not be perceptible in the objects possessing them. Neither do they exert their influence by suggesting ideas of the qualities alluded to. They operate in a more direct manner. They become, as we have said, perfect substitutes for the ideas, and acquire the same power over the mind. The contemplation of the ideas is attended by a sensation of comfort and satisfaction; and the appearance of the substitutes, without suggesting the ideas, produces the same sensation.

It is an analogy of the same sort which causes regularity of plan to be required in most artificial productions. It is not on account of the obvious convenience of such an arrangement, that the entrance and all other architectural features of which there is but one, look best when placed in the centre of a building; that windows are commonly disposed in rows or pairs, and that pairs are expected to consist of members precisely alike. The disorderly manner in which windows are scattered over the back of a common London house, does not offend the eye because it is presumed to be incommodious to the inmates; on the contrary, it is taken for granted that some very cogent motives of convenience must have occasioned such a deviation from architectural propriety. But the structure of all animals and of many plants is such, as to allow of their being divided into two exactly similar parts. Single features are situated in the centre of the face, and limbs and features of which there are more than one, are placed at equal distances from each other. Exceptions to this rule are the result of defective formation, or of accident, and affect the beholder in the same manner as the abstract ideas of incompleteness and violent distortion. The unsightliness of irregularities in productions of art may be traced to the same source. The appearance of an edifice with only one wing, or with the door on one side, offends the eye in the same manner, and for the same reason, as a man with only one arm, or with a wry mouth; and symmetry is scarcely less indispensable in many articles of furniture, in vases, carriages, and ships. But it is not esteemed in parks, or gardens, because the models of these are natural landscapes; and, as nature never disposes hills, valleys, or trees, in methodical order, so in gardens where

“Grove nods to grove, each alley has his brother,  
And half the platform just reflects the other,”

such excessive regularity is justly censured as formal.

The above is not offered as a complete explanation of the beauty of form. It is chiefly applicable to curved or waving lines, symmetrical proportions, and smooth surfaces, and seems to condemn all heavy masses, and sharp, rigid, and irregular figures. Yet appearances of the latter class are not invariably offensive; but on the contrary, when judiciously combined with others of a different description, add greatly to the general effect. Thus, abrupt precipices and jagged rocks are often the most important features in a fine landscape. A poplar standing alone has a stiff and formal look; but when rising above a cluster of other trees, separately more elegant, is often the most admired member of the group. Sharp angularities, elsewhere so objectionable, are not found fault with in architectural pediments and cornices. In fact, there is scarcely anything not positively shocking, or disgusting, which may not be so placed as to produce a picturesque effect. The beauty which is thus generated, must, we think, be referred to that craving for variety to which all mankind are subject, and which makes almost any change from monotony preferable to no change at all. This peculiarity of the human mind, which can create beauty where it would not otherwise exist, can also neutralize its charm where it exists in the greatest abundance. The most lovely objects fatigue by constant repetition. The eye would rest but languidly on a boundless plain planted with roses, or paved with rubies or emeralds, or on a long succession of edifices of faultless but uniform design; nay, would scarcely bestow an approving glance on the Medicean Venus herself, if her exquisite features were the common property of womankind. After perusing a whole room-full of Sir Peter Lely's beauties at Hampton Court, it is almost a relief to turn to the starched plainness of Queen Elizabeth in an adjoining apartment.

This seems to be a proper place for a remark which should not have been so long deferred, if a convenient opportunity had occurred for introducing it earlier. Although the suggestion of pleasing ideas cannot make an object beautiful, the suggestion of unpleasing ideas may counteract the effect of beauty. The reason probably is, not so much that the appearance ceases to produce its usual effect on the eye, as because the sensation of pleasure so produced is overpowered by the pain of the thoughts which simultaneously occupy the mind. The most ardent lover of the picturesque would view without much delight a conflagration which was destroying his property, though he could not deny the brilliancy of the spectacle. Few men look with pleasure on a person, however handsome, whom they greatly dislike, or on a place or thing which has been to them the scene or instrument of some

great calamity; but they do not, in consequence, think their enemies ugly, or consider that a spot has changed its aspect because they are no longer attracted by it. It is the interposition of disagreeable thoughts which prevents our admiring things in themselves beautiful, but misplaced, or incongruously combined. The union of small limbs with a large trunk would offend by sinning against proportion; but, independently of the want of symmetry, the junction of parts so ill-assorted would suggest disagreeable ideas of diseased and unnatural growth, and would cause us to look with something like disgust on the prettiest hand and the neatest ankle. An ancient castle, built according to a design suited to the date of its construction, may be beheld with a pleasure quite independent of any historical associations; but our admiration of the most splendid modern castle, such as that near Bangor, is alloyed by reflections upon the absurdity of elaborately raising obsolete defences in a situation where no enemies can be apprehended. Affectation or pretence of any sort is as intolerable in architecture as everywhere else. We cease to admire an edifice as soon as we find that it is not what it pretends to be. Modern ruins lose all their picturesqueness the moment they are perceived not to be genuine antiques; and the sham temples and palaces of Regent Street, even if built after chaster models, would still be condemned for being in reality nothing but shops. London's commemorative monument loses half of its effect from a different cause. No one can see it without surprise that so handsome a column should have been erected to exhibit—not a statue of Phœbus, the symbol of the element by which the city was destroyed; nor of Sir Christopher Wren, the architect by whom it was rebuilt—but merely a very clumsy representation of a very tasteless emblem—a blazing urn of gilt bronze. If we should see realised Goldsmith's favorite illustration of a man "wearing ruffles while wanting a shirt," we should certainly think less of the richness of the lace than of the wearer's folly in buying expensive ornaments while in want of necessaries. When masses of trees and untrimmed fields are seen close to the walls of an elegant mansion, the uncultivated aspect which would be approved of elsewhere, is censured on account of the inconsistency of bringing together the wildness of nature and the finished productions of art. In the immediate neighbourhood of a house a garden-like neatness is most appropriate, which prunes the luxuriance of nature without too rigidly constraining it. Neat gravel walks, closely shaven lawns, regularly disposed flower-beds—even statues and vases—are there perfectly in character; but specimens of the *ars topiaria*—shrubs, cut, however skilfully, into the shapes of animals—are nowhere admissible; not merely because the natural

forms of plants are commonly the most beautiful they can assume, but also because materials which will not retain the shapes given them by the sculptor, are evidently unsuitable for the exercise of his art. Upon the same principle may be explained the preference usually shown, in the case of human beings, for the mean size between opposite extremes. It must be observed that it is only in human beings that this intermediate size is preferred, for it does not seem probable that a tree, or a palace, or a statue, would lose any of its beauty by being greatly magnified or diminished. A Lilliputian tiger or stag would certainly be thought very pretty; and if the first named animal ceased to be admired when enlarged to Brobdignagian dimensions, it would only be because terror would then overwhelm every other feeling. But in mankind, every considerable deviation from the mean stature is held to be not merely unnatural, but also to produce unfitness for social intercourse; and it is for this reason that a giant or a dwarf, although of the most correct proportions, would appear to disadvantage amongst persons of ordinary size. In every one of these instances the sentiment of admiration excited by the perception of beauty is intercepted by the conflicting reflections suggested by beauty's ill-chosen concomitants. We may now see why the beauty of the human countenance would vanish, if, according to an hypothesis already referred to, the forms and colours which are now indicative of pleasing qualities should become the habitual signs of disease and vice.

It would seem, from what has been said, that beautiful forms are indebted for their distinctive characteristic, either to their having been originally associated with ideas of utility and convenience, and to their having become, in consequence, efficient substitutes for those ideas—or to the spectator's innate love of variety. There are a few cases, however, for which this explanation will not suffice. The beauty of the human countenance, in particular, cannot be satisfactorily accounted for solely by a reference to the delicacy or flowing outlines of its features, and to the diversification of its surface by gentle prominences and depressions. Expression and complexion must be added to the list of elements; and we must also have recourse to what Sir Joshua Reynolds styled "the central form,"\* admitting, for example, that the superiority of a straight nose arises partly from its being the intermediate type between the extreme shapes into which that important feature is apt to diverge. Those opposite extremes are equally ugly because equally unnatural; and that may be presumed to be the most beautiful shape which, being

\* Third Discourse addressed to the Students of the Royal Academy.

half-way between them, is at the greatest distance from both. Still, it may be fairly doubted whether the analysis is quite complete, and whether there is not in the female face, over and above its more intelligible charms, a secret witchery, of which no more can be said than that it captivates the beholder.

Beauty of colour, like that of form, takes its rise, in a few instances, from association with some pleasing idea, and more frequently from the spectator's love of variety ; but it generally exists independently of either. Exclusively of their acquired or accidental properties, there is in many colours an inherent power of pleasing the eye. Some are universally perceived to be more agreeable than others. Every one prefers green, blue, and pink, even when presented in shapeless and unmeaning patches, to black and brown ; and the youngest baby coos with delight at the sight of a watch, or of a flame, or a gay flower, and cries with fear when left alone in the dark, or when approached by a person clad in mourning. Now, the variations of beauty apparent in the colours daubed upon a painter's pallet can scarcely be traced to distinct ideas connected with each, and it is at least certain that an infant can have no pre-conceived notions associated with hues which it beholds for the first time. It is manifest, therefore, that whatever pleasure is afforded by colours in such circumstances, must be imparted to the sense and not to the intellect ; and it is not less clear that the power of communicating it must be inherent in the colours, and must have existed in them antecedently to the spectator's observation of them. These propositions appear to us so self-evident, that we should have pronounced them to be indisputable, if Lord Jeffrey had not assailed them with his usual boldness and dexterity. We do not think it necessary to discuss his objections at much length, but we may mention one or two of the most important. If a colour which affords organic pleasure to the eye be properly called beautiful, what offends or gives pain to the eye should, we are told, be called ugly : yet moderate light, which gratifies the eye, is not called beautiful, but only agreeable or refreshing ; and excessive or dazzling light, which offends the eye, is not called ugly, but only painful or disagreeable. To which it seems sufficient to reply, that although a colour which pleases the eye be for that reason justly called beautiful, it does not follow that everything that soothes or gratifies the eye must likewise be beautiful. Otherwise, that epithet would be as justly due to collyrium and eye-water as to the rainbow. Again, it is asserted that no colour is esteemed beautiful in every situation—not, for example, blue in the cheeks, nor green in the sky, nor vermilion in the grass. Nor, it is said, would any man choose to have a blue house, or a

green ceiling, or a pink coat. These remarks we shall meet with a retort more direct than courteous, maintaining that favourite colours *do* please invariably, except when they occur in situations to which they are plainly unsuitable, and when, consequently, disagreeable reflections arise to intercept the agreeable sensations which would otherwise be experienced. Blue cheeks or lips would be regarded as signs of disease; but the sky has no lovelier tint than the soft green which is sometimes seen above the rising or setting sun; and a field of red grass would, at a little distance, present much the same appearance as a field of red clover. Modern fashion forbids the habitual use of gay colours in male attire; but whenever her interdict is withdrawn, demure civilians may be seen arrayed in brilliantly variegated habiliments, and it is notorious that a red coat is among the most powerful attractions of the military profession. But it is needless to multiply examples. The intrinsic beauty of colours seems to be sufficiently established by the fact of their affording pleasure when beheld for the first time. The argument founded upon this observation appears to be decisive, and neither to require any additional support, nor to be in danger of being shaken by any violence.

Denying as he does intrinsic beauty to separate colours, Lord Jeffrey cannot be expected to recognise it in particular combinations of them. He suspects that there is "no little pedantry, and no little jargon in what connoisseurs say of the harmony and composition of tints." Perhaps there may be; and we must at any rate confess that we understand no more than Lord Jeffrey, "of the natural gamut of colours, and the inherent congruity of those that are called complementary with reference to the prismatic spectrum." Nevertheless, though without knowing why, we do know positively, that certain combinations of colours are naturally more pleasing than others; for we have frequently observed that of the very same flowers, arranged in several different ways, may be composed nosegays of very various degrees of beauty. One such instance as this (and a hundred might easily be cited), seems to us quite sufficient to prove that certain combinations of colours are naturally more pleasing than others; and we do not think that a contrary inference is warranted by the fact, that "multitudes of persons having the perfect use of their eyes, delight in combinations which to others are offensive." For to say nothing of differences in the tastes of different persons, taste in colours, as in everything else, may be modified by education, and education of the senses is simply experience of numerous and varied sensations. An uneducated ear is insensible to jarring notes that would distract a professed musician; but when it has had frequent opportunities of comparing discord

with harmony, it never fails to prefer the latter. Now, the Dutch shopkeeper, who fondly gazes upon his bright red and sky-blue summer-house, may never have been taught to notice the effect of such a mixture of colours as a painter would approve, and at all events, has not acquired skill enough to compose such a mixture for himself. Yet, if it were exhibited to him, he would probably at once see its superiority to his own incongruous combination, which he would accordingly cease to admire when he discovered how much it might be improved.

We have now, we trust, exhibited with sufficient distinctness, our notions both of the nature of beauty and of its mode of operation. We consider that there is a beauty inherent in colour, the pleasure derived from which consists of a sensual emotion, which we are in many cases as little able to account for, as for the gratification afforded by perfumes or sweetmeats. Sometimes, however, the beauty of colour is derived from association with pleasing ideas; and the same association is the most common source of the beauty of form. So far our views appear to coincide with those of some preceding writers, but there is a great difference between us in the meaning we attach to the term *association*. We deny that the beauty of an object springs from its connexion with recollections of past enjoyments, for we have shown that similar reminiscences might be awakened by an object devoid of beauty. The ideas with which beauty is associated, are of a peculiar class. They are the abstract ideas of convenience, comfort, and ease, to which, in certain situations, particular forms have been observed to be conducive, or of which particular forms or colours have been observed to be significant. Yet the beauty of such forms and colours does not reside in their power of suggesting the ideas with which they are connected; for even where they are really indicative of those ideas, they are frequently admired when the ideas do not occur to the spectator; and, moreover, the same forms and colours are equally admired in situations in which they have no utility and no significance. The real secret of their influence we conceive to be this:—that having been frequently observed to promote, or denote, convenience and comfort, they become not merely emblems of those ideas, but efficient visible substitutes for them—affecting the beholder in precisely the same manner as if the ideas had presented themselves to his mind; and that, as the ideas are never contemplated without a sensation of pleasure, so the appearance of their substitutes, though it may not suggest the ideas, is accompanied by the same sensation as the latter would have excited. Thus, the beauty of visible objects—even when it has an intellectual origin, and springs from the association of particular

appearances with particular ideas—nevertheless exerts only a sensual influence, and acts only on the spectator's feelings, without supplying the materials of his thoughts. Here we might stop, if there were no other species of beauty than the one we have been considering. But music or poetry may be beautiful, or a mathematical problem, or a mechanical contrivance. The same epithet is also applied, though somewhat affectedly, to human character and conduct, and it is perfectly correct to speak of beautifully washed, or beautifully mended linen. In none of these instances does beauty address itself to the eye. The beauty of music is perceived by the ear; that of poetry, partly by the ear and partly by the understanding; that of the other examples, by the understanding alone. For an ingenious machine is not admired on account of its form or colour. We do not think the shape of a steam-engine elegant, neither do we pretend that a neatly-darned stocking looks better than it did when it was new, and before it required repair. What really pleases us is the cleverness of the contrivance, or the skill of the needlewoman—qualities which cannot be discovered by the eye alone, without the aid of an active intellectual operation. Thus it appears that there are many other kinds of beauty besides that which has been described as the power of pleasing the eye; but it does not follow that the definition which is not sufficiently comprehensive to embrace all the different species, may not be strictly correct when confined to a single one. Lord Jeffrey contends that beauty can never be the power of pleasing the eye, because the same term is applied to the sources of pleasures to which the eye is insensible; and there certainly is an apparent anomaly in applying to what cannot possibly be seen, and can only be detected by the ear or the understanding, the appropriate epithet of pleasing objects of sight. Language, however, is full of similar irregularities, of which a very good example is furnished by one of the names of that quality, which has already been frequently referred to as analogous to beauty. If we use the word beautiful in connexion not only with material objects, but also with sounds, and with intellectual and moral essences, we are not more sparing in the use of the word "nice." We talk of a nice peach, nice behaviour, a nice question, and a nice distinction; so that substances, actions, and abstractions, are all characterised by the same expression. We speak likewise of sweetmeats, sweet scents, sweet music, a sweetheart, and a sweet temper. There is as little affinity between these various sorts of sweetness and niceness, as between the most dissimilar kinds of beauty; and if the latter had absolutely nothing in common, the fact of their being classed under the same designation, would be a sign of nothing.

except of the scantiness of the human vocabulary. But the most dissimilar sorts of beauty, how much soever they may differ in other respects, have all one point of resemblance. They all excite admiration, and the power of exciting this sentiment is invariably what constitutes their beauty. Whatever is beautiful is admirable, and what is admirable is generally beautiful. The terms are not exactly synonymous (for some portion of love or affection must be mingled with the sentiment inspired by beauty), but there are few occasions on which the one may not be substituted for the other, without much loss of force or precision. A landscape, an edifice, a musical or literary composition, a problem, an invention, an act of self-devotion, may all be beautiful. If beautiful, they will be admired; and their beauty will reside in the peculiarity, whatever it may be, which causes them to be admired.

We are here reminded of the essential difference between beauty and sublimity—which are certainly quite distinct from each other, and not, as Lord Jeffrey imagines, merely unequal manifestations of one and the same quality. The sublime is derived from association with a class of ideas with which beauty has no necessary connexion—those, namely, of eternity, infinity, omnipotence, and the like. It may inspire admiration; but the admiration is blended, not with love, but awe, and unmingled awe is commonly the only sentiment excited. If there are any features in natural scenery which may be justly termed sublime, they are frightful precipices and horrid abysses, whose very names seem to deny the presence of beauty. Alpine solitudes and boundless expanses of land or water are always sublime; but whether they possess beauty likewise, depends upon the accidents of form and colour. Thunder is sublime, and so, too, perhaps, may be the noise of a cart rattling over the street, as long as it is mistaken for thunder; but neither the one nor the other is ever thought beautiful, because there is nothing pleasing in the sound. Sublime poems or paintings are those which, like the works of Milton and Michael Angelo, vividly represent scenes, or forcibly express ideas calculated to inspire awe. The beauty of such compositions depends upon the mode of execution,—their sublimity, or the nature of the subject; for no subject, however skilfully treated, can attain to the sublime unless it be originally of an awe-inspiring character. But, although distinct, beauty and sublimity are not incompatible; both attributes may belong to the same object, and there is, therefore, no impropriety in speaking of the sublime beauties of nature, or of the Scriptures.

Beauty, then, in its largest and most comprehensive sense, may, without much inaccuracy, be defined to be the power of exciting

admiration; for, however various the disguises she may wear, this will invariably be found to constitute her essence. But although this be the constant and unfailing characteristic of all the species, some of them have likewise other points in common. Beauty of sound resembles beauty of visible objects, in acting, not upon the intellect, but upon a bodily sense; as the one imparts pleasing sensations to the eye, so does the other convey corresponding sensations to the ear, and it is only by affording this auricular gratification that music acquires its right to be called beautiful. Of course we do not mean to assert that the pleasure yielded by music is exclusively sensual, or to deny that a large portion of the delight derived from it is purely intellectual. We freely admit that it commonly awakens recollections connected with occasions on which the same airs were formerly heard.

"With easy force it opens all the cells  
Where memory slept. Wherever we have heard  
A kindred melody, the scene recurs,  
And with it all its pleasures and its pains."

But if music did no more than this, there would be no difference between the chimes of a village church and the finest composition of Mozart. The most discordant noises may be agreeably suggestive. Street cries, the lowing of cattle, the cackling of geese, the shrill whistle of a railway engine, may serve as effectually as the most exquisite strain to remind us of past enjoyments. It cannot then be by reason of its beauty that music thus affects the memory, since any sounds, however inharmonious, may possess the very same influence. Neither will we assert that music never speaks an intelligible language, and that, by imitating natural sounds, it may not address itself directly to the understanding. But we do say that the diminution of beauty will be in exact proportion to the success of the imitation. If the imitation be perfect—if the clash of arms, or the howling of the tempest, or the roar of wild beasts be completely counterfeited—the composition will lose almost the whole of its beauty, and will, indeed, cease to be musical. Music's legitimate domain does not extend beyond the feelings. It may sooth or exhilarate—melt into tenderness or goad into fury; but the emotions which it excites are indefinable, and differ little from what might have been produced by wine or opiates. Of itself, and without the aid of words, it cannot effectually describe, nor plead, nor exhort. Upon the intellect it acts rather as a sedative than a stimulant, and its charm is never so deeply felt as when, to use the words of Dryden,

"We are so ravished with its heavenly note  
We stand entranced, and have no room for thought."

Even poetry, an art which deals directly with ideas, does not afford a pleasure purely intellectual. Its effects are sensual so far as they are dependent upon the musical arrangement of the words; and that very much depends upon this particular, will be at once perceived if we reflect that many very agreeable verses have absolutely nothing poetical about them, save rhyme and metre, and that poetry of the very highest order would lose much of its charm by being converted into prose, even though the same ideas continued to be expressed with the same force as before. What would be lost would be the influence previously exerted upon the ear, for the ideas and images presented to the mind would continue unaltered; and an impression received by the ear and unperceived by the understanding, cannot be other than sensual. Sensual influence, however, constitutes only a very small part of the beauty of all poetry really deserving the name, whose principal charm is commonly derived from vigorous description, apt comparisons, just similitudes, felicitous epithets and expressions. We have here started a topic which we should have been glad to pursue farther, taking the opportunity to point out that the specific excellence of poetry depends more upon the mode in which ideas are presented to the mind than upon the quality of the ideas themselves. But we forbear. It is hard to refuse to follow where Beauty leads the way, but we have already overstepped our limits, and the blandishments of the enchantress shall not persuade us to trespass farther on the patience of our readers. T.

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ART. II.—*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. X. Parts 1, 2, 3; Vol. XI. Part 1. The Persian Inscription at Behistun, deciphered and translated by Major H. C. Rawlinson.—Parker. 1817—1849.

IN reading the works of Greek historians, we are often struck by the glimpses which they give us of an immense world of Asiatic life, which lay far removed from the daily acts and scenes in the midst of which the authors wrote. Persia only appears on the stage as a great uncertain shadow; but yet as a shadow thrown by some solid, although distant, substance. If but little known to the Greeks, Persia was not the less a great reality. True heroes were they whose valour and wisdom called it into existence; and perhaps few pages of ancient history would be more interesting, if we could recover the lost annals of Persia, than those which comprise the period from Cyrus' birth to the victories of Alexander. These





11.

Jeffrey



THE  
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ART. I.—*Life of Lord Jeffrey : with a Selection from his Correspondence.* By LORD COCKBURN, one of the Judges of the Court of Session in Scotland. 2 vols. Edinburgh, 1852.

IT was in the winter of 1786–7 that the poet Burns, a new prospect having been suddenly opened up to him by the kind intervention of Blacklock, and a few other influential men in Edinburgh, abandoned his desperate project of emigrating to the West Indies, and hastened to pay his first and memorable visit to the Scottish metropolis. During that winter, as all who are acquainted with his life know, the Ayrshire ploughman, then in his twenty-ninth year, was the lion of Edinburgh society. Lord Monboddo, Dugald Stewart, Harry Erskine, Dr. Robertson, Dr. Hugh Blair, Henry Mackenzie, Dr. Gregory, Dr. Black, Dr. Adam Ferguson—such were the names then most conspicuous in the literary capital of North Britain ; and it was in the company of these men, alternated with that of the Creeches, the Smellies, the Willie Nicols, and other contemporary Edinburgh celebrities of a lower grade, that Burns first realized the fact that he was no mere bard of local note, but a new power and magnate in Scottish literature.

To those who are alive to the poetry of coincidences, two anecdotes connected with this residence of Burns in Edinburgh will always be specially interesting. What reader of Lockhart's *Life of Scott* is there who does not remember the account there given of Scott's first and only interview with Burns? As the story is now more minutely told in Mr. Robert Chambers's *Life of Burns*, Scott, who was then a lad of seventeen, just removed from the High School to a desk in his father's office, was invited by his friend and companion, the son of Dr. Ferguson, to accom-

pany him to *his* father's house on an evening when Burns was to be there. The two youngsters entered the room, sat down unnoticed by their seniors, and looked on and listened in modest silence. Burns, when he came in, seemed a little out of his element, and, instead of mingling at once with the company, kept going about the room, looking at the pictures on the walls. One print particularly arrested his attention. It represented a soldier lying dead among the snow, his dog on one side, and a woman with a child in her arms on the other. Underneath the print were some lines of verse descriptive of the subject, which Burns read aloud with a voice faltering with emotion. A little while after, turning to the company and pointing to the print, he asked if any one could tell him who was the author of the lines. No one chanced to know, excepting Scott, who remembered that they were from an obscure poem of Langhorne's. The information, whispered by Scott to some one near, was repeated to Burns, who, after asking a little more about the matter, rewarded his young informant with a look of kindly interest, and the words, (Sir Adam Ferguson reports them,) "You'll be a man yet, sir." Such is the one story, the story of the "literary ordination," as Mr. Chambers well calls it, of Scott by Burns—a scene which we think Sir William Allan would have delighted to paint. The other story, we believe, is now told for the first time by Lord Cockburn. Somewhere about the very day on which the foregoing incident happened, "a little black creature" of a boy, we are told, who was going up the High Street of Edinburgh, and staring diligently about him, was attracted by the appearance of a man whom he saw standing on the pavement. He was taking a good and leisurely view of the object of his curiosity, when some one standing at a shop-door tapped him on the shoulder, and said, "Ay, laddie, ye may weel look at that man! that's Robert Burns." The "little black creature," thus early addicted to criticism, was Francis Jeffrey, the junior of Scott by four years, and exactly four years behind him in the classes of the High School, where he was known as a clever nervous little fellow, who never lost a place without crying. It is mentioned as a curious fact by Lord Cockburn, that Jeffrey's first teacher at the High School, a Mr. Luke Fraser, had the singular good fortune of sending forth, from three successive classes of four years each, three pupils no less distinguished than Walter Scott, Francis Jeffrey, and Henry Brougham.

It is not for the mere purpose of anecdote that we cite these names and coincidences. We should like very much to make out for Scotland in general as suggestive a series of her intellectual representatives as Lord Cockburn has here made out for part of the pedagogic era of the worthy and long dead Mr.

**Luke Fraser.** Confining our regards to the eighteenth century, the preceding paragraphs enable us to group together at least three conspicuous Scottish names as belonging, by right of birth, to the third quarter of that century—Burns, born in Ayrshire in 1759; Scott, born in Edinburgh in 1769; and Jeffrey, born in the same place in 1773. Supposing we go a little farther back for some other prominent Scottish names of the same century, the readiest to occur to the memory will be those of James Thomson, the poet, born in Roxburghshire in 1700; Thomas Reid, the philosopher, born near Aberdeen in 1710; David Hume, born at Edinburgh in 1711; Robertson the historian, born in Mid-Lothian in 1721; Tobias Smollett, the novelist, born at Cardross in the same year; Adam Smith, born at Kirkaldy in 1723; Robert Fergusson, the Scottish poet, born at Edinburgh in 1750; and Dugald Stewart, born at Edinburgh in 1753. And if for a similar purpose, we come down to the last quarter of the century, five names at least will be sure to occur to us, in addition to that of Brougham—Thomas Campbell, born at Glasgow in 1777; Thomas Chalmers, born at Anstruther in Fifeshire in 1780; John Wilson, born, if we may trust our authorities, at Paisley in 1789; Thomas Carlyle, born at Ecclefechan in Dumfries-shire in 1795; and Sir William Hamilton, born at Edinburgh before the close of the century. In this list we omit the distinguished contemporary Scottish names in physical science; we ought not, however, to omit the names of Sir James Mackintosh, born near Inverness in 1765, and James Mill, born at Montrose in 1773. The short life of Burns, if we choose him as the central figure of the group, connects together all these names. The oldest of them was in the prime of life when Burns was born, and the youngest of them had seen the light before Burns died.

On glancing in order along this series of eminent Scotchmen born in the eighteenth century, it will be seen that they may be roughly distributed into two nearly equal classes—men of philosophic intellect, devoted to the work of general speculation, or thought as such; and men of literary or poetic genius, whose works belong more properly to the category of pure literary or artistic effort. In the one class may be ranked Reid, Hume, Adam Smith, Dugald Stewart, Mackintosh, Mill, Chalmers, and Sir William Hamilton; in the other, Thomson, Smollett, Robertson, Fergusson, Burns, Scott, Jeffrey, Campbell, Wilson, Irving, and Carlyle. Do not let us be mistaken. In using the phrases “philosophic intellect” and “literary genius,” to denote the distinction referred to, we do not imply anything of accurate discrimination between the phrases themselves. For aught that we care, the phrases may be reversed, and the men of the one class

may be styled men of philosophic genius, and those of the other, men of literary habit and intellect. If we prefer to follow the popular usage in our application of the terms, it is not with any intention of making out for the one class, by the appropriation to it of the peculiar term "genius," a certificate of a higher kind of excellence than belongs to the other. Even according to the popular acceptation of the term, several of those whom we have included in the literary category—as, for example, Robertson, must be denied the title of men of genius; while, according to no endurable definition of the term, could the title of men of genius be refused to such men as Adam Smith, or Chalmers, or Hamilton. Nor even, when thus explained, will our classification bear any very rigid scrutiny. By a considerable portion of what may be called the fundamental or unapparent half of his genius, Carlyle belongs to the class of speculative thinkers; while, on the other hand, the case of Chalmers is one in which the thinking or speculative faculty, which certainly belonged to him, was surcharged and deluged by such a constant flood from the feelings that, instead of ranking him with the thinkers as above, we might, with equal or greater propriety, transpose him to the other side, or even name him on both sides. His thinking faculty, which was what he himself set most store by, was so beset and begirt by his other and more active dispositions, that instead of working on and on through any resisting medium with iron continuity, it discharged itself almost invariably, as soon as it touched a subject, in large proximate generalizations. On the whole, then, instead of the foregoing classification of eminent Scotchmen into men of speculation and men of general literature, one might adopt as equally serviceable a less formal classification which the common satirical talk respecting Scotchmen will suggest. The hard, cool, logical Scotchman—such is the stereotyped phrase in which Englishmen describe the natives of North Britain. There is a sufficient amount of true perception in the phrase to justify its use; but the appreciation it involves reaches only to the surface. The well-known phrase, *perferendum ingenium Scotorum*, used, Buchanan tells us, centuries ago on the continent to express the idea of the Scottish character then universally current and founded on a large induction of instances, is, in reality, far nearer to the fact. Without maintaining at present that *all* Scotchmen are perfervid,—that Scotchmen in general are, as we have seen it ingeniously argued, not cool, calculating, and cautious, but positively rash, fanatical, and tempestuous; it will be enough to refer to the instances which prove at least that *some* Scotchmen have this character. The thing may be expressed thus:—On referring to the actual list of Scotchmen who have attained eminence by their writings

or speeches in this or the last century, two types may be distinguished, in one or the other of which the Scottish mind seems necessarily to cast itself—an intellectual type specifically Scottish, but Scottish only in the sense that it is the type which cultured Scottish minds assume when they devote themselves to the work of specific investigation; and a more popular type, characterizing those Scotchmen who, instead of pursuing the work of specific investigation, follow a career calling forth all the resources of Scottish sentiment. Scotchmen of the first or more recondite and formal type are Reid, Smith, Hume, Mill, Mackintosh, and Hamilton, in all of whom, notwithstanding their differences, we see that tendency towards metaphysical speculation for which the Scottish mind has become celebrated; Scotchmen of the other or popular type, partaking of the metaphysical tendency or not, but drawing their essential inspiration from the sentimental depths of the national character, are Burns, Scott, Chalmers, Irving, and Carlyle. However we may choose to express it, the fact of this two-fold forthgoing of the Scottish mind, either in the scholastic and logical direction marked out by one series of eminent predecessors, or in the popular and literary direction marked out by another series of eminent predecessors, cannot be denied.

After all, however, (for we cannot yet leave this topic,) there is, classify and distinguish as we may, a remarkable degree of homogeneousness among Scotchmen. The people of North Britain are more homogeneous—have decidedly a more visible basis of common character—than the people of South Britain. A Scotchman may indeed be almost anything that is possible in this world; he may be a saint or a debauchee, a Christian or a sceptic, a spendthrift or a usurer, a soldier or a statesman, a poet or a statistician, a fool or a man of genius, clear-headed or confused-headed, a Thomas Chalmers or a Joseph Hume, a dry man of mere secular facts, or a man through whose mind there roll for ever the stars and all mysteries. Still, under every possible form of mental combination or activity, there will be found in every Scotchman something distinguishable as his birth-quality or *Scotticism*. And what is this *Scotticism* of Scotchmen—this ineradicable, universally-combinable element or peculiarity, breathed into the Scottish soul by those conditions of nature and of life which inhere in or hover over the area of Scottish earth, and which are repeated in the same precise *ensemble* nowhere else? Comes it from the hills, or the moors, or the mists, or any of those other features of scenery and climate which distinguish bleak and rugged Scotland from green and fertile England? In part, doubtless, from these, as from all else that is Scottish. But there are hills, and moors, and

mists where Scotchmen are not bred ; and it is rather in the long series of the memorable things that have been done on the Scottish hills and moors—the acts which the retrospective eye sees flashing through the old Scottish mists, that one is to seek the origin and explanation of whatever Scotticism is. Now, as compared with England at least, that which has come down to the natives of Scotland as something peculiar, generated by the series of past transactions of which their country has been the scene, is an intense spirit of nationality.

No nation in the world is more factitious than the Scotch—more composite as regards the materials out of which it has been constructed. If in England there have been Britons, Celts, Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans, in Scotland there have been Celts, Britons, Romans, Norwegians, Danes, Anglo-Saxons, and Normans. The only difference of any consequence in this respect probably is, that whereas in England the Celtic element is derived chiefly from the British or Welsh, and the Teutonic element chiefly from the Continental-German source, in Scotland the Gaels have furnished most of the Celtic, and the Scandinavian Germans most of the Teutonic element. Nor, if we regard the agencies that have acted intellectually on the two nations, shall we find Scotland to have been less notably affected from without than England. To mention only one circumstance, the Reformation in Scotland was marked by a much more decided importation of new modes of thinking and new social forms than the Reformation in the sister country. But though quite as factitious, therefore, as the English nation, the Scottish, by reason of its very smallness, for one thing, has always possessed a more intense consciousness of its nationality, and a greater liability to be acted upon throughout its whole substance by a common thought or common feeling. Even as late as the year 1707, the entire population of Scotland did not exceed one million of individuals ; and if, going farther back, we fancy this small nation placed on the frontier of one so much larger, and obliged continually to defend itself against the attacks of so powerful a neighbour, we can have no difficulty in conceiving how, in the smaller nation, the feeling of a central life would be sooner developed and kept more continuously active. The sentiment of nationality is essentially negative ; it is the sentiment of a people which has been taught to recognise its own individuality by incessantly marking the line of exclusion between itself and others. Almost all the great movements of Scotland, as a nation, have accordingly been of a negative character, that is, movements of self-defence—the War of National Independence against the Edwards ; the Non-Episcopal struggle in the reigns of the Charleses ; and even the Non-Intrusion

controversy of later times. The very motto of Scotland, as a nation, is negative—*Nemo me impune lacesset*. It is different with England. There have of course been negative movements in England too, but these have been movements of one faction or part of the English people against another; and the activity of the English nation, as a whole, has consisted, not in preserving its own individuality from external attack, but in fully and genially evolving the various elements which it finds within itself, or in powerful positive exertions of its strength upon what lies outside it.

The first and most natural form of what we have called the Scotticism of Scotchmen, that is, of the peculiarity which differentiates them from people of other countries, and more expressly from Englishmen, is this *amor patriæ*, this inordinate intensity of national feeling. There are very few Scotchmen who, whatever they may pretend, are devoid of this pride of being Scotchmen. Penetrate to the heart of any Scotchman, even the most Anglified, or the most philosophic that can be found, and there will certainly be found a remnant in it of loving regard for the little land that lies north of the Tweed. And what eminent Scotchman can be named in whose constitution a larger or smaller proportion of the *amor Scotiæ* has not been visible? In some of the foremost of such men, as Burns, Scott, and Wilson, this *amor Scotiæ* has even been present as a confessed ingredient of their genius,—a sentiment determining, to a great extent, the style and matter of all that they have written or attempted.

“The rough bur-thistle spreading wide  
 Among the bearded bear,—  
 I turn'd the weeding-heuk aside,  
 And spared the symbol dear.  
 No nation, no station  
 My envy e'er could raise—  
 A Scot still, but blot still,  
 I knew nae higher praise.”

In reading the writings of such men, one is perpetually reminded, in the most direct manner, that these writings are to be regarded as belonging to a strictly national literature. But even in those Scotchmen in the determination of whose intellectual efforts the *amor Scotiæ* has acted no such obvious and ostensible part, the presence of some mental reference to, or intermittent communication of sentiment with, the land of their birth, is almost sure to be detected. The speculations of Reid and Hume and Adam Smith, and, in some degree, also, those of Chalmers, were in subjects interesting not to Scotchmen alone, but to the human race as such; and yet, precisely as these men enunciated their generalities intended for the whole world in

good broad Scotch, so had they all, after their different ways, a genuine Scottish relish for Scottish humours, jokes, and antiquities. The same thing is true of Carlyle, a power as he is recognised to be not in Scottish only, but in all British literature. Even James Mill, who, more than most Scotchmen, succeeded in conforming, both in speech and in writing, to English habits and requirements, relapsed into a Scotchman when he listened to a Scottish song, or told a Scottish anecdote. But perhaps the most interesting example of the appearance of an intense *amor Scotiæ*, where, from the nature of the case, it could have been least expected, is afforded by the writings of Sir William Hamilton. If there is a man now alive conspicuous among his contemporaries for the exercise on the most magnificent scale of an intellect the most pure and abstract, that man is Sir William; and yet, not even when discussing the philosophy of the unconditioned or perfecting the theory of syllogism which is universal, does Sir William forget his Scottish lineage. With what glee, in his notes, or in stray passages in his dissertations themselves, does he seize every opportunity of adding to the proofs that speculation in general has been largely affected by the stream of specific Scottish thought—quoting, for example, the saying of Scaliger, “*Les Ecossois sont bons Philosophes* ;” or dwelling on the fact that at one time almost every continental university had a Scottish professorship of philosophy, specially so named; or reviving the memories of defunct Balfours, and Duncans, and Chalmerses, and Dalgarnos, and other “*Scoti extra Scotiam agentes*” of other centuries; or startling his readers with such genealogical facts as that Immanuel Kant and Sir Isaac Newton had Scottish grandfathers, and that the celebrated French metaphysician Destutt Tracy was, in reality, but a transmogrified Scotchman of the name of Stott! We know nothing more refreshing than such evidences of strong national feeling in such a man. It is the Scottish Stagirite not ashamed of the bonnet and plaid; it is the philosopher in whose veins flows the blood of a Covenanter.

Even now, when Scotchmen, their native country having been so long merged in the higher unity of Great Britain, labour altogether in the interest of this higher unity, and forget or set aside the smaller, they are still liable to be affected characteristically in all that they do by the consciousness that they are Scotchmen. This will be found true whether we regard those Scotchmen who work side by side with Englishmen in the conduct of British public affairs or British commerce, or those Scotchmen who vie with Englishmen in the walks of British authorship and literature. In either case the Scotchman is distinguished from the Englishman by this, that he carries the

consciousness of his nationality about with him. Were he, indeed, disposed to forget it, the banter on the subject to which he is perpetually exposed in the society of his English friends and acquaintances, would serve to keep him in mind of it. It is the same now with the individual Scotchman cast among Englishmen as it was with the Scottish nation when it had to defend its frontier against the English armies. He is in the position of a smaller body placed in contact with a larger one, and rendered more intensely conscious of his individuality by the constant necessity of asserting it. But this self-assertion of a Scotchman among Englishmen, this constant feeling "I am a Scotchman," rests, like the feeling of nationality itself, on a prior assertion of what is in fact a negative. For a Scotchman to be always thinking "I am a Scotchman," is, in the circumstances now under view, tantamount to always thinking "I am *not* an Englishman." The Englishman, on the other hand, has no corresponding feeling. As a member of the large body, whose corporate activity has always, from the very circumstance of its being the larger, been positive rather than negative, the Englishman simply acts out harmoniously his English instincts and tendencies, the feeling of not being a Scotchman, never (except in the case of a stray Englishman located in Scotland) either spontaneously remaining in his mind, or being roused in it by banter. The Scotchman, in short, who works in the general field of British activity, has his thoughts conditioned to some extent at least by the negative of not being an Englishman; the Englishman thinks under no such limitation.

And this leads us to a definition more essential and intimate of the peculiarity of Scottish as compared with English thought. The rudest and most natural form of what we have called the Scotticism of Scotchmen, consists, we have hitherto been saying, in simple consciousness of nationality, simple *amor Scotiæ*, or, under mere restricted circumstances, the simple feeling of not being an Englishman. There are some Scotchmen, however, in whom this first and most natural form of Scotticism is not very well pronounced, and who are either emancipated from it, or think that they are. We know not a few Scottish minds who have really succeeded in transferring their enthusiastic regards from Scotland as such to the higher unity of Great Britain—men, who, sometimes speaking in their own Scottish accent, sometimes in an accent almost purely English, find the objects of their solicitude and admiration, not in the land lying north of the Tweed, but rather in England—its rich green parks and fields, its broad ecclesiastical hierarchy, its noble halls of learning, its majestic and varied literature, the full and generous character of its manly people. We know Scotchmen whose

sentiment is more deeply stirred by Shakespeare's famous apostrophe to "this England," than by Scott's to the land of brown heath and shaggy wood. And as Scotland and England are incorporated, such men are and must be on the increase. But even they shall not escape. If their native quality of Scotticism does not survive in them in the more palpable and open form of mere national feeling, mere *amor Scotiæ*, it survives, nevertheless, in an intellectual habit, having the same root, and as indestructible. And what is this habit? The popular charges of dogmatism, opinionativeness, pugnacity, and the like, brought against Scotchmen by Englishmen, are so many approximations to a definition of it. For our part, we should say that the special habit or peculiarity which distinguishes the intellectual manifestations of Scotchmen—that, in short, in which the Scotticism of Scotchmen most intimately consists,—is the habit of *emphasis*. All Scotchmen are emphatic. If a Scotchman is a fool, he gives such emphasis to the nonsense he utters as to be infinitely more insufferable than a fool of any other country; if a Scotchman is a man of genius, he gives such emphasis to the good things he has to communicate, that they have a supremely good chance of being at once or very soon attended to. This habit of emphasis, we believe, is exactly that *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum* which used to be remarked some centuries ago, wherever Scotchmen were known. But emphasis is perhaps a better word than fervour. Many Scotchmen are fervid too, but not all; but all, absolutely all, are emphatic. No one will call Joseph Hume a fervid man, but he is certainly emphatic. And so with David Hume, or Reid, or Adam Smith, or any of those colder-natured Scotchmen of whom we have spoken; fervour cannot be predicated of them, but they had plenty of emphasis. In men like Burns, or Chalmers, or Irving, on the other hand, there was both emphasis and fervour; so also with Carlyle; and so, under a still more curious combination, with Sir William Hamilton. And as we distinguish emphasis from fervour, so would we distinguish it from perseverance. Scotchmen are said to be persevering, but the saying is not universally true; Scotchmen are or are not morally persevering, but all Scotchmen are intellectually emphatic. Emphasis, we repeat, intellectual emphasis—the habit of laying stress on certain things rather than co-ordinating all—in this consists what is essential in the Scotticism of Scotchmen. And, as this observation is empirically verified by the very manner in which Scotchmen enunciate their words in ordinary talk, so it might be deduced scientifically from what we have already said regarding the nature and effects of the feeling of nationality. The habit of thinking emphatically is a necessary result of thinking

much in the presence of, and in resistance to, a negative; it is the habit of a people that has been accustomed to act on the defensive, rather than of a people peacefully self-evolved and accustomed to act positively; it is the habit of Protestantism rather than of Catholicism, of Presbyterianism rather than of Episcopacy, of Dissent rather than of Conformity.

The greatest effects which the Scottish mind has yet produced on the world—and these effects, by the confession of Englishmen themselves, have not been small—have been the results, in part at least, of this national habit of emphasis. Until towards the close of last century, the special department of labour in which Scotchmen had, to any great extent, exerted themselves so as to make a figure in the general intellectual world, was the department of Philosophy—Metaphysical and Dialectic. Their triumphs in this department are historical. What is called the Scottish Philosophy, constitutes, in the eyes of all who know anything of history, a most important stage in the intellectual evolution of modern times. From the time of those old Duncans, and Balfours, and Dalgarnos, mentioned by Sir William Hamilton, who discoursed on philosophy, and wrote dialectical treatises in Latin in all the cities of the Continent, down to our own days, we can point to a succession of Scottish thinkers in whom the interest in metaphysical studies was kept alive, and by whose labours new contributions to mental science were continually being made. It was by the Scottish mind, in fact, that the modern philosophy was conducted to that point where Kant and the Germans took it up. The qualifications of the Scottish mind for this task were, doubtless, various. Perhaps there was something in that special combination of the Celtic and the Scandinavian out of which the Scottish nation, for the most part, took its rise, to produce an aptitude for dialectical exercises. Nay, farther, it would not be altogether fanciful to suppose that those very national struggles of the Scotch in the course of which they acquired so strong a sense of their national individuality, that is, of the distinction between all that was Scotch and all that was not Scotch, served, in a rough way, to facilitate to all Scotchmen that fundamental idea of the distinction between the *Ego* and the *Non-Ego*, the clear and rigorous apprehension of which is the first step in philosophy, and the one test of the philosopher. But, in a still more important degree, we hold the success of the Scottish mind in philosophy to have been the result of the national habit of intellectual emphasis. A Scotchman, when he thinks, cannot, so easily and comfortably as the Englishman, repose on an upper level of propositions co-ordinated for him by tradition, sweet feeling, and pleasant circumstance; that necessity of his nature

which leads him to emphasise certain things rather than to take all things together in their established co-ordination, drives him down and still down in search of certain generalities whereon he may see that all can be built. It was this habit of emphasis, this inability to rest on the level of sweetly-composed experience, that led Hume to scepticism; it was the same habit, the same inability, conjoined, however, with more of faith and reverence, that led Reid to lay down in the chasm of Hume's scepticism certain blocks of ultimate propositions or principles, capable of being individually enumerated, and yet, as he thought, forming a sufficient basement for all that men think or believe. And the same tendency is visible among Scotchmen now. It amazes Scotchmen to see on what proximate propositions even Englishmen who are celebrated as thinkers can rest, and how little the best of them, such as Whewell, Maurice, Hare, Henry Taylor, and some others, seem to feel the necessity of persisting towards first principles. The essays of Henry Taylor and of Arthur Helps are, in this respect, most characteristically English. As writings, they are most sweet, solid, and soothing; and yet there is many a Scotchman with not half the intellect of either of the writers, to whom, by reason of his native tendency to seek for the emphatic, they would appear almost shallow. So also with that much praised old English book, Browne's *Religio Medici*, and with many other old English prose writings. The truth is that, if Scotchmen have, so far, a source of superiority over Englishmen in their habit of dwelling only on the emphatic, they have also in this same habit a source of inferiority. Quietism, mysticism, that soft meditative disposition which takes things for granted in the co-ordination established by mere life and usage, pouring into the confusion thus externally given the rich oil of an abounding inner joy, interpenetrating all and harmonizing all—these are, for the most part, alien to the Scotchman. No, his walk, as a thinker, is not by the meadows, and the wheat-fields, and the green lanes, and the ivy-clad parish churches, where all is gentle, and antique, and fertile, but by the bleak sea-shore which parts the certain from the limitless, where there is doubt in the sea-mew's shriek, and where it is well if, in the advancing tide, he can find footing on a rock among the tangle! But this very tendency of his towards what is intellectually extreme, injures his sense of proportion in what is concrete and actual; and hence it is that when he leaves the field of abstract thought, and betakes himself to creative literature, he produces nothing comparable in fulness, wealth, and harmoniousness to the imaginations of a Chaucer or a Shakespeare. The highest genius, indeed, involves also the capability of the intellectual extreme; and, accordingly, in the writings of

those great Englishmen, as well as in those of the living English poet Tennyson, there are strokes in abundance of that pure intellectual emphasis in which the Scotchman delights; but then there is also with them such a genial acceptance of all things, great or small, in their established co-ordination, that the flashes of emphasis are as if they came not from a battle done on an open moor, but from a battle transacting itself in the depths of a forest. Among Scottish thinkers, Mackintosh is the one that approaches nearest to the English model, a circumstance which may be accounted for by the fact that much of what he did consisted, from the necessities of the object-matter of his speculations, in judicious compromise.

But even in the field of literature we will not abandon the Scotchman. His habit of emphasis has here enabled him to do good service too. His entry on this field, however, was later than his entry on the field of philosophy. True, there had been, contemporary with the Scottish philosophers, or even anterior to them, Scottish poets and general prose writers of note — Dunbar, Gawin Douglas, King James, Buchanan, Sir David Lindsay, Henderson, Sir George Mackenzie, Allan Ramsay, and the like. True, also, in those snatches of popular ballad and song which came down from generation to generation in Scotland, many of them written by no one knew who, and almost all of them overflowing with either humour or melancholy, there was at once a fountain and a promise of an exquisite national literature. We could think of old Nicol Burn, the violer, till our eyes filled with tears.

“ But minstrel Burn cannot assuage  
His woes while time endureth,  
To see the changes of this age  
Which fleeting time procureth.  
Full many a place stands in hard case  
Where joy was wont beforrow,  
With Humes that dwelt on Leader side,  
And Scotts that dwelt on Yarrow.”

There was literature in the times when such old strains were sung. But the true avatar of the Scottish mind in modern literature, came later than the manifestation of the same mind in Philosophy. Were we to fix a precise date for it, we should name the period of Burns's first visit to Edinburgh, and familiar meetings with the men of literary talent and distinction then assembled there. Edinburgh was, indeed, even then a literary capital, boasting of its Monboddos, and Stewarts, and Robertsons, and Blairs, and Mackenzies, and Gregories—men who had already begun the race of literary rivalry with their contemporaries south of the Tweed. But, so far as the literary excel-

lence of these men did not depend on their participation in that tendency to abstract thinking, which had already produced its special fruit in the Scottish Philosophy, it consisted in little more than a reflection or imitation of what was already common and acknowledged in the prior or contemporary literature of South Britain. To write essays such as those of the *Spectator*; to be master of a style which Englishmen should pronounce pure, and to produce compositions in that style worthy of being ranked with the compositions of English authors—such was the aim and aspiration of Edinburgh literati, between whom and their London cousins there was all the difference that there is between the latitude of Edinburgh and the latitude of London, between the daily use of the broad Scotch dialect, and the daily use of the classic English. For Scotland this mere imitation of English models was but a poor and unsatisfactory vein of literary enterprise. What was necessary was the appearance of some man of genius who should flash through all that, and who, by the application to literature, or the art of universal expression, of that same Scottish habit of emphasis which had already produced such striking and original results in philosophy, should teach the Scottish nation its true power in literature, and shew a first example of it. Such a man was Burns. He it was who, uniting emotional fervour with intellectual emphasis, and drawing his inspiration from all those depths of sentiment in the Scottish people which his predecessors, the philosophers, had hardly so much as touched, struck for the first time a new chord, and revealed for the first time what a Scottish writer could do by trusting to the whole wealth of Scottish resources. And from the time of Burns, accordingly, there has been a series of eminent literary Scotchmen quite different from that series of hard logical Scotchmen who had till then been the most conspicuous representatives of their country in the eyes of the reading public of Great Britain—a series of Scotchmen displaying to the world the power of emphatic sentiment and emphatic expression as strikingly as their predecessors had displayed the power of emphatic reasoning. While the old philosophic energy of Scotland still remained unexhausted, the honours of Reid and Hume and Smith and Stewart passing on to such men as Brown and Mill and Mackintosh and Hamilton (in favour of the last of whom even Germany has resigned her philosophic interregnum), the specially literary energy which had been awakened in the country descended along another line in the persons of Scott, and Jeffrey, and Chalmers, and Campbell, and Wilson, and Carlyle. Considering the amount of influence exerted by such men upon the whole spirit and substance of British literature,—considering how disproportionate a share of the whole literary produce of Great

Britain in the nineteenth century has come either from them or from other Scotchmen.—and considering what a stamp of peculiarity marks all that portion of this produce which is of Scottish origin, it does not seem too much to say, that the rise and growth of Scottish Literature is as notable a historical phenomenon as the rise and growth of the Scottish Philosophy. And considering, moreover, how lately Scotland has entered on this literary field, how little time she has had to display her powers, how recently she was in this respect savage, and how much of her savage vitality yet remains to be articulated in civilized books, may we not hope that her literary avatar is but beginning, and has a goodly course yet to run? From the Solway to Uddness we hear a loud Amen!

In thus connecting the name and the memory of Jeffrey with the history of the internal intellectual development and the external intellectual action of his native land, we have done a thing which he himself would have been the last to repudiate, and which, whether he would have repudiated it or not, is natural, just, and becoming. Everything is as it is possible for it to be; and that the new era of British criticism was inaugurated by a Scotchman is a proof that a Scotchman was the man to inaugurate it. What, then, was Jeffrey among Scotchmen, and what were the talents and circumstances that fitted him for his task?

The Life of Jeffrey by Lord Cockburn is a work of very great merit, intrinsically worth a hundred of such lives of distinguished men as are daily proceeding from the press. It is not, indeed, an artistic biography; it does not shape and mould the character of Jeffrey by a succession of descriptive touches, and deposit it finally as a finished conception of the man in the minds of distant readers; it contains no elaborate or subtle appreciation of Jeffrey's more intimate views and feelings, or of his place and function in the literary movement of his time. But the writer knew and loved his subject, and it was not for the purpose of making a book that he wrote his life. He had known him in youth, he had known him in old age; he had been his friend and daily companion;—not a sentence, therefore, did he write, but the lineaments of the dead were before him, and the old familiar tones were present to his ear. It would be a miracle, then, if he had written untruly, and if some image of the man as he really was were not placed before the reader. Add to this, that the successive events of Jeffrey's life are duly recorded and explained; and that the appended selection from his letters is at once ample and judicious. In one portion of the Life, too, Lord Cockburn, as was to be expected, has

acquitted himself in a manner quite masterly. This is where he describes the condition of Scotland in general, and of society in Edinburgh in particular, at the time when Jeffrey entered upon public and literary life. Nothing could be better than the sketches given of the state of Scottish politics at that period, and of the more prominent personages who were then connected with the Scottish Bar, or otherwise invested with importance in the public opinion of the country. Macaulay could have done this part of the book with finer literary art, but not with more clear and thorough insight. One is glad to see that, notwithstanding a certain tendency to euphuism, as if Lord Cockburn had throughout the book laid a restraint on the well-known vigour of his Scottish sense and humour, lest by indulging it he should Scotticize Jeffrey too much, the Scotchman nevertheless breaks through sufficiently to remind all who know the author by repute, that a man more thoroughly Scotch at heart is not now known to the purlicus of the Parliament House, or familiar to the citizens of the New Town of Edinburgh. With Lord Cockburn for our guide, therefore, let us view Jeffrey for a little longer against his native background of Scottish manners and Scottish associations.

From his very boyhood, Jeffrey belonged to a rather peculiar type of the Scottish *physique* and character. The son of a genuine citizen of Edinburgh, attached as a clerk to its law courts, and described as a sensible, plodding, and somewhat morose man, Jeffrey, even at the High School, was noted as a sharp, nervous, swarthy little fellow, of a type and physiognomy different from that of the majority of Scottish boys. Walter Scott, though at first a sickly and lame scholar, almost always absent from the classes, grew up a stalwart fair-haired youth, capable of taking part in a row in the pit of a theatre, or in any other freak that required bone and sinew; Jeffrey, with plenty of spirit and alacrity, remained always sharp, incisive, and diminutive. Transferred at the age of fourteen to Glasgow College, where he received the better part of his academic training, and where he was one of the most distinguished pupils of one of the best professors that ever taught in a Scotch University—John Jardine, Professor of Logic—he became known there to his heavier class-fellows, as an extremely quick, fluent, petulant youth, unmercifully severe in his criticisms on the essays of other students; not very sparing in his comments even on the professors; and who, in spite of raillery and the Glasgow decorum of those days, persisted in the whim of cherishing a very black moustache, covering the whole of his upper lip. Even at this time he was a great reader, a rapid writer for his own amusement, and a favourite speaker in the College Clubs and Societies.

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After two years at Glasgow, he returned to Edinburgh, where he spent two years more, partly in attending the law-classes at the University, partly in miscellaneous literary occupations prescribed by himself. The quantity of manuscript, in the form of essays, translations, orations, and even poems, produced by him at this period, or between his sixteenth and nineteenth year, was, as we learn from his biographer, something quite extraordinary; and it is curious to remark in the extracts which are given from some of these productions, the early and decided tendency of Jeffrey's mind to literary criticism. Almost all his own essays, it appears, had appended to them a paragraph or two of self-criticism,—generally a very slashing review of their merits and demerits on a retrospective perusal of them; and one manuscript of seventy folio pages is devoted to an elaborate analysis of his own character. A sample of Jeffrey at seventeen reviewing himself may not be uninteresting. The following is from a criticism appended to a collection of thirty essays:—

“It was, I thought, and so far I surely did think justly, a very essential point for a young man to acquire the habit of expressing himself with ease upon subjects which he is unavoidably one time or another to talk of. This, to be sure, might perhaps have been attained, in a degree adequate to all common occasions, without being at the trouble to write down all that I said, or might have said, on them; and as the habit of writing and speaking are not reciprocal, the plan of accustoming myself to speak a great deal upon them may perhaps appear better calculated for this purpose. But besides that I thus avoid many inaccuracies, and, as I am in Scotland, many improprieties, I can spare auditors from the fatigue of being the tools and vehicles of my experiment, and save myself from the reputation of talkativeness and folly. But though the habit of speaking easily be a very valuable one, that of thinking correctly is undoubtedly much more so. This, too, cannot be attained by mere mechanical practice, and an earlier exertion of those powers, with which every one is endued, is absolutely necessary to confirm it. The human mind, at least mine, which is all I have to do with, is such a chaotic confused business, such a jumble and hurry of ideas, that it is absolutely impossible to follow the train and extent of our ideas upon any one topic, without more exertion than the conception of them required. To remedy this, and to fix the bounds of our knowledge and belief on any subject, there is no way but to write down, deliberately and patiently, the notions which first naturally present themselves on that point; or, if we refuse any, taking care it be such as have assumed a place in our minds merely from the influence of education or prejudice, and not those which the hand of reason has planted, and which have been nurtured by the habit of reflection. . . . The only other object I had in view was, perhaps not the least important of the whole, to attempt an imitation of the style and manner of the principal persons who have exhibited their abilities in periodical and

short essays. Dr. Johnson, Addison, Mackenzie, and Steele, are the only personages I have attempted to ape, and these it would be absurd in me to cope with. I have at least this consolation, that my emulation can be called by no means little. Of these essays I have little more to say. I have, in truth, said perhaps already more than they deserve."—*Life*, pp. 30-33.

Here, for a youth of seventeen, we have certainly industry, ambition, a swift, sharp audacity of opinion, and a wonderful fluency of words. That much envied faculty, usually called "command of language," Jeffrey, if we may judge from this and similar specimens, certainly had from the first. In fact, it is not treating the thing too seriously to note, in connexion with such a specimen, the early appearance of what was all along Jeffrey's defect. We have spoken of emphasis as most specifically the quality of the Scottish mind; and we have described as the proper manifestation of this emphasis in the direction of *thought*, that resolute striving after first principles, that tendency to rest only on distinct and massive generalities, which has been conspicuously exhibited in the works of the Scottish thinkers. Now in this kind of emphasis, or at least in emphasis leading to this result, Jeffrey was certainly deficient. Nimble leaping from point to point, from commonplace to something better, and from something better back to commonplace, but always with a distinct and characteristic meaning in the end; a hawk-like ease of motion, and keenness of vision in the atmosphere of what may be called the proximate notions of educated men—this, rather than a sluggish attachment to certain propositions or maxims emphasised once for all, or than a tendency, in every individual case of intellectual exertion, to push through the object-matter, and carry all on to the terminus of some new proposition that *might* be emphasised and clung to, was the mental peculiarity of Jeffrey. As soon as he began to write, his acute mind darted along from conception to conception, seizing points of real truth and consequence, and insinuating itself with great delicacy into the longest and most winding intricacies; words, too, flowed in abundance, most apt for the expression of his meaning; but instead of stemming the words as they came, and damming them back, as it were by a mental resolve, till by their very accumulation and pressure the meaning to be finally expressed became deep and weighty, he suffered himself to be carried along in their flow, not completing the thought first, but thinking as he swam. This "command of language," indeed, so soon conspicuous in Jeffrey, is not an unfrequent sign of promising talent in early life; but we have generally found it give way, with men of real ability, before youth was over, under the influence of a newly-awakened tendency towards

the deep and precise in thought. Nor can we help thinking that, had anything occurred, during Jeffrey's youth, to arrest his native fluency, and to arouse him to the value of that kind of mental effort which seeks for ultimate propositions, and spends itself in framing them, even he would have turned out a more weighty and thoroughgoing writer, after the peculiar Scottish type. But, probably, Jardine's class rather stimulated than repressed his native tendency in this respect; and of neither of the two men who in that day were the best academic representatives of the claims of matter as distinct from those of style—Miller of Glasgow, and Dugald Stewart of Edinburgh—was Jeffrey ever the pupil. What of the Scottish tendency to emphatic thought, therefore, Jeffrey possessed—and much of it he did possess—was revealed not so much in a recurrence to, or a gravitation towards, deep formal propositions on various subjects, as in a general salience he always contrived to give to what he accounted important, a kind of sharp decisive ring of the voice on what *he* believed and *you* might doubt. On the whole, he had far more of the Scottish tendency to thought as such than Scott, in whom the national turn for emphasis spent itself entirely in sentiment and descriptive expression, and who, as the very form of his head indicated, abode contentedly all his life among the popular sagacities, and eschewed all movement towards the intellectually extreme.

A brief residence by Jeffrey in Oxford in 1791-2, always remembered by him as a time of insupportable loneliness and ennui, had at least one effect upon him which, like his moustache at Glasgow, exposed him to the raillery of his Scottish friends. "Jeffrey," Lord Holland afterwards said, "had lost the broad Scotch at Oxford, but he had gained only the narrow English." No one, indeed, could hear Jeffrey in after life without noting, as something peculiar, his sharp, petulant, high-keyed manner of pronouncing his words, so different from either the broad full sing-song of a genuine Scottish speaker, or the firm and manly speech of an educated Englishman. The change was a bold one for a Scottish youth of that day. As late as fifteen years ago, in most parts of Scotland, a schoolboy that should have presumed to talk English, except on stated occasions within school, or that even then should have exhibited too sedulous a study of the vowel-sounds in Walker's Dictionary, would have been treated as a daw with borrowed feathers, and unmercifully plucked. In Jeffrey's case, however, the little affectation, if such it was, which led him to pick up the English accent, was something pleasantly characteristic. He never really ceased to be a Scotchman. Till his dying day, the *amor patriæ* was conspicuously strong in him, and he never lost his relish for Scottish

humours and Scottish phraseology. He could talk Scotch when he liked, Lord Cockburn says, "as correctly as when the Doric of the Edinburgh Lawnmarket had been only improved in him by that of the Glasgow Rottenrow;" and we have it on undoubted authority that when, among his familiar friends, he took to telling his reminiscences of old Braxy and other notabilities of the Scottish Bench and Bar, no one could beat him as a mimic, and not even Scott could convey a Scotticism better.

Between Jeffrey's return from Oxford and his entry on professional life as a Scottish barrister, there intervened a period of two years, spent in law-studies, in agreeable intercourse with his friends; in brilliant speech-making at the weekly meetings of the famous Speculative Club, then and long afterwards the training school of young celebrities native to Edinburgh, or sent thither from England to attend the University; and in the gratification of his literary propensity by the increase of his private stock of manuscripts on all sorts of subjects. He had serious thoughts, it appears, at one time of trying to become a poet. So convinced, however, is his biographer that this was a hallucination, that, with bundles of Jeffrey's early poetical efforts before him, he has not given us a single specimen. In the extracts given from the prose writings of the same period we recognise, in somewhat more matured combination, the same qualities that were discernible in the earlier productions—extreme fluency in tasteful expression; an intellect, swift, keen, and glancing, rather than deep or heavy; a cutting, unhesitating declaration of opinion *for* this or *against* that at a moment's notice; and a decided tendency to the practice of criticism.

It was with all these qualities developed in him in a degree that rendered him notable among the young men who knew him, and with an amount of general culture and knowledge such as was possessed by few of them, that Jeffrey, in the winter of 1794, assumed the gown and wig of a Scottish barrister. It is at this epoch in his life that he may be regarded as having first ceased to be a mere reader and student, and as having come into a position of practical relationship to Scottish polity, and the whole circle of Scottish interests. The population of Scotland may have then amounted to about a million and a half; Edinburgh was the centre of all the political activity of this small population; the lawyers of Edinburgh were its social aristocracy; and Jeffrey, as a young member of this aristocracy, had a more decided part to choose, and a more active future in prospect, than if he had been a mere ordinary citizen. We cannot better introduce the reader to an acquaintance with Jeffrey in this aspect than by quoting from Lord Cockburn's

admirable delineation of the state of Scottish society towards the end of the last and the beginning of the present century.

“ Everything was inflamed by the first French Revolution. Even in England all ordinary faction was absorbed by the two parties—of those who thought that that terrible example, by shewing the dangers of wrongs too long maintained, was the strongest reason for the timely correction of our own defects; and of those who considered this opinion as a revolutionary device, and held that the atrocities in France were conclusive against our exciting sympathetic hopes by any admission that curable defect existed. . . . Never, since our own Revolution, was there a period when public life was so exasperated by hatred, or the charities of private life were so soured by political aversion.

“ If this was the condition of England, with its larger population, its free institutions, its diffused wealth, and its old habits of public discussion, a few facts will account for the condition of Scotland. There was then in this country no popular representation, no emancipated burghs, no effective rival of the Established Church, no independent press, no free public meetings, and no better trial by jury, even in political cases, (except high treason,) than was consistent with the circumstances, that the jurors were not sent into Court under any impartial rule, and that, when in Court, those who were to try the case were named by the presiding judge. The Scotch representatives were only forty-five; of whom thirty were elected for counties, and fifteen for towns. Both from its price and its nature (being enveloped in feudal and technical absurdities) the elective franchise in counties, where alone it existed, was far above the reach of the whole lower, and of a great majority of the middle, and of many even of the higher ranks. There were probably not above 1500 or 2000 county electors in all Scotland; a body not too large to be held, hope included, in Government's hand. The return, therefore, of a single opposition member was never to be expected. . . . Of the fifteen town members, Edinburgh returned one. The other fourteen were produced by clusters of four or five unconnected burghs electing each one delegate, and these four or five delegates electing the representative. Whatever this system may have been originally, it had grown, in reference to the people, into as complete a mockery as if it had been invented for their degradation. The people had nothing to do with it. It was all managed by Town-Councils, of never more than thirty-three members; and every Town-Council was self-elected, and consequently perpetuated its own interests. The election of either the town or the county member was a matter of such utter indifference to the people, that they often only knew of it by the ringing of a bell, or by seeing it mentioned next day in a newspaper; for the farce was generally performed in an apartment from which, if convenient, the public could be excluded. . . . Scotland did not maintain a single opposition newspaper, or magazine, or periodical publication. . . . Meetings of the adhe-

rents of Government for party purposes, and for such things as victories and charities, were common enough. But, with ample materials for opposition meetings, they were in total disuse. I doubt if there was one held in Edinburgh between the year 1795 and the year 1820. Attendance was understood to be fatal. The very banks were overawed, and conferred their favours with a very different hand to the adherents of the two parties. . . . Thus, politically, Scotland was dead. It was not unlike a village at a great man's gate. Without a single free institution or habit, opposition was rebellion, submission probable success.

"If there had been any hope of ministerial change, or even any relief by variety of ministerial organs, the completeness of the Scotch subjugation might have been less. But the whole country was managed by the undisputed and sagacious energy of a single native who knew the circumstances, and the wants, and the proper bait, of every countryman worth being attended to. Henry Dundas, the first Lord Melville, was the Pharos of Scotland. Who steered upon him was safe; who disregarded his light was wrecked. It was to his nod that every man owed what he got, and looked for what he wished. Always at the head of some great department of the public service, and with the indirect command of places in every other department and the establishments of Scotland, instead of being pruned, multiplying—the judges, the sheriffs, the clergy, the professors, the town-councillors, the members of parliament and of every public board, including all the officers of the revenue, and shoals of commissions in the military, the naval, and the Indian service, were all the breath of his nostril. This despotism was greatly strengthened by the personal character and manners of the man. Handsome, gentlemanlike, frank, cheerful, and social, he was a favourite with most men, and with all women. Too much a man of the world not to live well with his opponents when they would let him, and totally incapable of personal harshness or unkindness, it was not unnatural that his official favours should be confined to his own innumerable and insatiable partisans. With such means so dispensed, no wonder that the monarchy was absolute. . . . To be at the head of such a system was a tempting and corrupting position for a weak, a selfish, or a tyrannical man. But it enabled a man with a head and a temper like Dundas's to be absolute without making his subjects fancy that they ought to be offended. He was the very man for Scotland at that time, and is a Scotchman of whom his country may be proud. Skilful in Parliament, wise and liberal in Council, and with an almost unrivalled power of administration, the usual reproach of his Scotch management is removed by the two facts—that he did not *make* the bad elements he had to work with, and that he did not *abuse* them; which last is the greatest praise that his situation admits of.

"In addition to common political hostility, this state of things produced great personal bitterness. The insolence, or at least the confidence, of secure power on the one side, and the indignation of *usage* on the other, put the weaker party, and seemed to justify

under a tacit proscription. It both excluded those of one class from all public trust, which is not uncommon, and obstructed their attempts to raise themselves anyhow. To an extent now scarcely credible, and curious to think of, it closed the doors and the hearts of friends against friends. There was no place where it operated so severely as at the Bar. . . . These facts enable us to appreciate the virtuous courage of those who really sought for the truth, and, having found it as they thought, openly espoused it. . . . The shires, with only a few individual exceptions, were soulless. But, in all towns, there were some thinking, independent men. Trade and manufactures were rising; the municipal population was increasing; the French Revolution, with its excitement and discussion of principles, was exciting many minds. The great question of Burgh Reform, demonstrably clear in itself, but then denounced as revolutionary, had begun that deep and just feeling of discontent, which operated so beneficially on the public spirit of the citizens all over Scotland for the next forty years. The people were silent from prudence. A first conviction of simple sedition by a judge-named jury was followed by transportation for fourteen years. They, therefore, left their principles to the defence of the leading Whigs; who, without any special commission, had the moral authority that belongs to honesty and fearlessness. These were chiefly lawyers, whose powers and habits connected them with public affairs;—a bold and united band, without whose steadiness the very idea of independence would, for the day, have been extinguished in Scotland.”—*Life*, pp. 73-81.

To this small but devoted phalanx of Scottish Whigs Jeffrey from the first attached himself. Scott, as was more natural to a man of his predilections, took the other or Tory side. It is a sad thing, if one looks at the matter with any very serious attention, that good men in this world should be obliged thus to take sides at all, or at least to enrol themselves once for all under any one or any other ready-made denomination. One could wish that it were permitted to a man simply to look about for the good things he would like to see done, and to lend his help in time and season to the doing of them, never puzzling his head whether it was Whiggism to do this, or Toryism to do that, or whether the thing to be done had a name at all, provided it were clearly something reasonable in his private view of it. One could wish that what Burns, who still, however, called himself a Whig, once said of his politics, namely, that “he had a few first principles which he would not easily part with, but that, as to all the etiquette, &c., of the thing, he would not have a dissocial word about it with any of God’s creatures,” could be allowed to pass universally as confession of faith enough in political matters. But unfortunately this is impossible. Old port gathers bees’-wing—the more bees’-wing, they say, the better the wine; and so, in all societies that have lasted some time there float about

traditional maxims and distinctions which one could wish away, were one not assured that they are signs of body and vigour in the very medium they perplex. And, certainly, after Lord Cockburn's description of what Scottish Whiggism forty years ago was, and what it promised to be the exodus out of, one cannot but think that the most unsectarian man ever born into the world might, with perfect safety to his intellectual independence, have been a Scottish Whig. And yet such a source of virtue is there in the antique; so natural is it for strong and genial minds to acquiesce in the conditions that actually exist, unless these are so bad as to outrage the most vital human requirements; such reciprocal kindliness is there between a healthy tree and the soil where it has grown, that it may be doubted whether even Scottish Conservatism, which was by no means of the best sort, has not had men at least as notable to boast of as Scottish Whiggism. If on the one side there have been Brown, Playfair, and Jeffrey; on the other there have been Scott, and Chalmers, and Wilson. In short, all that one can say on such a subject is, that there are some men, and particularly men of sharp, clear intellect, who have a characteristic instinct towards the future, to-day called Whiggism, and to-morrow perhaps something else; and that there are other men, and particularly men of large sentimental attachments, the moorings of whose being are mostly in the past. What substantial old fellows, now unnamed, or canonized only in local and civic memory, there must have been in Scotland under the rule of Melville; transacting, with perfect relish, a considerable amount of the roughly human existence under it: nay, poor old kerls, making their daily penny, and their annual oatmeal out of it! Yet Scottish Whiggism came to sweep them and the whole world of Dundas away, and who can now doubt that it was right it should?

Of Jeffrey's services as a Scotch Whig—how, gradually, from being a mere cadet in the ranks of the party, he came to be one of its chiefs and leaders; how Scotch Whiggism itself, at first only a hand's-breadth on the horizon, grew and grew under the care of himself and his friends, linking itself with the more powerful Whiggism of South Britain, till the whole atmosphere of the island was filled with Whig doctrine and Whig anticipation; how Jeffrey became in the end a Whig Member of Parliament, and helped in that capacity to deliver the surcharge atmosphere of the flash and thunderbolt of the Reform Bill; how he assisted to direct that special fork of the flash which upon Scotland, and shattered there the relics of the old Dundas system; and how Scotland willingly received him back to Parliament, when this service was done, as a Judge in

Supreme Court of Law, appointed by a Whig Government—of all this there is a sufficient account in the memoir by Lord Cockburn. Thither also we must refer our readers for an account of Jeffrey's progress in his strictly professional life—his slow introduction to practice; his feats as a counsel, and his peculiar merits and reputation in this capacity as compared with his rivals, the Clerks, the Cranstouns, the Moncreiffs, and (to add a name which the modesty of the biographer has concealed) the Cockburns of the contemporary Scottish Bar; as well as, finally, his demeanour and qualities as a Scottish Judge. It is enough here to say that, in his capacity both as a politician and as a lawyer, Jeffrey exhibited, with the highest effect, his peculiar combination of wonderful talents; and that, had he been during his whole life nothing else than a Scottish politician and a Scottish lawyer, he would still have been one of the most eminent Scotchmen of his generation. There was, indeed, a singular unity and individuality in all that he did. Whether he wrote or spoke as counsel, or gave judgment from the Bench, one still saw the same acute, clear, rapid, brilliant, peremptory, irresistible little creature. Were one to go to ornithology for a comparison, the falcon, which is said to be the strongest and most courageous bird of its size, might stand for the type of Jeffrey. With what a clear, brown, bright, almost too unabashed eye he saw everything; how readily he took wing; how rapidly and easily, whether in a straight line, or in descending circles, he bore himself to his object! His fluency alone astonished slow people. A good heavy Glasgow citizen who was defendant in a suit, after having listened with open mouth to the torrent of words in which Jeffrey, who was counsel for the plaintiff, addressed the Court against him, took out his watch and declared that, by a calculation according to the number of words uttered in a minute, the gentleman must have spoken the English language twice over in three hours. And as Jeffrey, though different from other Scottish writers, was still quite Scottish as a writer, so as a lawyer and a judge, though differing from his Scottish compeers, he was also essentially Scottish. Between such a man as Jeffrey, as representing the Scottish Bar, for example, and such a man as Follett, as representing the English, there was all the difference that there is between the two countries. In Jeffrey on the Bench, interrupting counsel in their pleadings, and keeping them to the point, somewhat to their discomfiture, one saw the same critical intellect that presided judicially over British literature in the *Edinburgh Review*; and yet all was in strict keeping, and Jeffrey was a true type of an able Scottish judge.

After all, however, as all the world knows, the main and char-

acteristic performance of Jeffrey's life, the special stroke of Scottish emphasis which it fell to him to inflict (if that word will appease our English friends in the midst of so much ultra-Scotticism) upon the condition of British society in the nineteenth century, was the *Edinburgh Review*. We have to regard Jeffrey more closely, therefore, as the Editor and chief support, during twenty-seven years, of this famous Scottish periodical. *Scottish* periodical, we say; for though Sydney Smith was one of the Edinburgh conclave of young men by whom it was started, and though many distinguished Englishmen were among its contributors, the editorship, from the very first, devolved upon Jeffrey; and more than half the regular contributors—and these the most familiar to the editor, if not the closest to the centre of publication—were Scotchmen. Jeffrey alone contributed, between the commencement of the *Review* in October 1802, at which time he was a briefless barrister of twenty-nine years of age and just married, and his resignation of the editorship in June 1829, when he was appointed, in his fifty-sixth year, to the Deanship of the Scottish Bar, about two hundred separate articles,—that is, on an average, two articles to every number. In the first number he had six articles; and in not a few of the earlier numbers he had as many as four or five. Nothing seems to have interrupted his attention to the *Review*—neither the growing claims of his profession; nor the poignancy of his sad widowerhood in 1805; nor his romantic voyage to America, in 1813, to wed his second wife. Even in his old age, Lord Cockburn and Jeffrey's own letters give us to understand, when the *Review*, after the death of the intervening editor, Mr. Macvey Napier, came under the management of his son-in-law, the present editor, Mr. Empson, he returned to it, like a septuagenarian re-introduced by circumstances to his first and somewhat aged love, and would often, in his quiet evenings at Craigerook, dabble again in editorial labours to amuse himself, and read or punctuate a favourite article. After his resignation of the editorship, however, in 1829, he contributed but three papers from his own pen. But between 1802 and 1829, the *Review* was more accurately and completely identified with his person than it is usual for any such periodical now to be identified with the person of even an active editor. What Jeffrey was, the *Review* was; and in his own series of contributions to its pages, its general scope, spirit, and power to influence were very adequately represented.

In the collection of his contributions to the *Review*, selected and republished by Jeffrey himself eight years ago, and containing about half of the whole number, the papers are loosely distributed under seven heads. A glance at these heads, and at

the varied nature of the contents under each, is calculated to give a lively impression of Jeffrey's readiness and versatility as a writer, and of his competence to the task of a universal observer and critic amid the passing phenomena of his time. It will be sufficient for us, in order to obtain a closer view of his talents and endeavours in this walk, to glance first at his writings on political topics, and then at his more numerous essays on subjects of general literature. To his performances as an occasional adventurer in the field of abstract and metaphysical discussion we can allude only incidentally.

For a definition of Jeffrey's principles as a politician and a political writer we have not far to seek. He was, both in his writings and his conduct, a consistent Whig; and if the reader is capable, as he may be with Lord Cockburn's help, of still farther discriminating between an English Whig and a Scottish Whig—between the Whiggism of Holland House, London, and the Whiggism of the Parliament House in Edinburgh—he will be master of a yet closer definition of Jeffrey's politics by thinking of him as a *Scottish Whig*. A distinguished and conscientious member of that great party, representing so large a mass of British sentiment and opinion, which may be considered to have had Fox for its hero, and of which Lord John Russell is now the most characteristic relic,—but a member of that party, who, being Scotch by his nativity and in his circumstances, not only had the special duty allotted to him of superintending the applications of Whiggism to that portion of British society which lies north of the Tweed, but, moreover, contributed largely, by his intellectual activity in the cause, to infuse something of Scottish theory into British Whiggism in general, and to blend, as it were, the two political atmospheres which the Tweed separates,—such, in politics both practical and speculative, was Jeffrey. In this respect, also, therefore, we regard Jeffrey as properly an agency in the gradual diffusion through British thought of the element of modern Scotticism. It is indeed a fact which no reasoning can rob of its significance, that though the battle of Whiggism, as a practical movement, was fought in London, (and necessarily so, Parliament being there), the literary part of the business was done in Edinburgh. The buff and the blue were worn in England in mere coats and waistcoats, articles whose explanatory power, as regards the creed which they symbolized, reached no farther, as one may say, than just dogmatically affirming the Whig proposition, and declaring that there were so many backs and breasts in support of it; it was in Scotland, the country of emphatic articulation, that Whiggism mounted to the head, and that the Whig colours were used not only in the costume of men, but also in the costume of a periodical. Burke,

indeed, had in some respects been the literary organ of Whiggism; but Burke was an Irishman. Charles Fox, too, was *par excellence* the Whig orator; but his oratory consisted rather in splendid practical assertions of English Whig feeling on cases as they occurred, than in connected elucidations of the theory of Whiggism. And at a later period, when Holland House was the centre and rendezvous of the working Whigs—the place where the prospects of the party were talked over and measures from day to day concocted—the severer ratiocination of the party was still transacted in Edinburgh, or at least reserved for the *Edinburgh Review*. How much influence Scotland thus had in modifying the theory of British Whiggism, and moulding the general body of Whig doctrine into its final shape as a fixed political creed, would appear more distinctly if one were to compare the expositions of Whiggism given by the practical English Whigs at the beginning of the present century, with the expositions of it which have become current since it sustained the emphasising stroke of Scottish speculation. Jeffrey was one of the men who contributed most to this result. Indeed, if there is any part of his writings where he shows more than in another that tendency to fundamental propositions in which, as compared with some of his eminent countrymen, we have remarked that he was deficient, it is in his essays on general politics. They are perhaps as deep things as could be written in connexion with Whiggism; very much deeper thinking might have parted the connexion. Most serviceable and safe in the concrete, or as a rule of political action in troubled times, Whiggism in the abstract, as even Whigs admit, lies so far on this side of the intellectually extreme, that any ambitious gentleman bound for that region must needs go through the other side of it, whether he means to return or not. But Jeffrey was most at home precisely at about the requisite distance from the intellectually extreme, and was, therefore, the very man to do his best scientifically when expounding Whiggism. Take, accordingly, the following passage, which expresses what we firmly believe was Jeffrey's deepest and most enduring conviction in politics:—

“The whole difference between a good and a bad government appears to us to consist in this particular, viz., in the greater or the less facility which it affords for the early, the gradual and steady operation of the substantial power of the community upon its constituted authorities; while the freedom, again, and ultimate happiness of the nation depend on the degree in which the substantial power is possessed by a greater or a smaller, and a more or less moral and instructed part of the whole society—a matter almost independent of the form or name of the government, and determined in a great degree by the progress which the society itself has made in civilisation

or refinement. . . . The great point is to ensure a free, an authoritative, and an uninterrupted communication between the ostensible administrators of the national power, and its actual constituents and depositaries; and the chief distinction between a good and a bad government consists in the degree in which it affords the means of such a communication. The main end of government, to be sure, is, that wise laws should be enacted and enforced; but such is the condition of human infirmity, that the hazard of sanguinary contentions about the exercise of power is a much greater and more imminent evil than a considerable obstruction in the making or execution of the laws; and the best government, therefore, is not that which promises to make the best laws, and to enforce them most rigorously, but that which guards best against the tremendous conflicts to which all administrations of government, and all exercise of political power, are so apt to give rise. It happens fortunately, indeed, that the same arrangements which most effectually ensure the peace of society against those disorders, are also, on the whole, the best calculated for the purposes of wise and efficient legislation. But we do not hesitate to look upon the negative or preventive virtues as of a far higher cast than their positive and active ones; and to consider a representative Legislature as incomparably of more value when it truly enables the efficient force of the nation to control and direct the executive, than when it merely enacts wholesome statutes in its legislative capacity." — *Review of Leckie's Essay on Government, written in 1812: see Contributions, vol. iii.*

Such is Jeffrey's version of the Whig principle in politics, and there is no principle more frequently reiterated in his writings. Again and again he recurs to it, sometimes expounding it formally, as above, sometimes incidentally referring to it, but always in such a way as to shew the supreme value in which he held it. That in every community there is a class holding the real and substantial power, whoever may be the person or persons in official authority, and on whatever supposed tenure they exercise that authority; that the extent of this class, its proportion to the whole community, as well as its character and composition, varies with the degree of civilisation to which the community has attained; that, in every case, the appropriate constitution is that set of devices which shall bring the opinion of the class who have the power most directly and surely to bear upon those who are in authority; that in England, and other similarly situated countries, where the class who have the power are numerous, and composed of very various elements, the best set of devices for the purpose in question consists in what is called Parliamentary or Representative government; that, therefore, this is the ultimate kind of government attainable by civilised men; and that, in England, therefore, the proper course to be adopted by political reformers is neither, on the one hand, to quarrel with

this form of government, out of any theoretical preference for the supposed social energy of an absolute executive, nor, on the other, to attack the existing executive form of a Limited Hereditary Monarchy, out of any theoretical preference for the greater logical simplicity of Republicanism, but to keep up continually the play and stroke of the real power upon the recognised executive, by at once and immediately admitting to a share in the representation any new ingredient of real power that time or education may develop, nay, even to foster in the community every tendency to such an extension of the real power throughout the mass of the hitherto unfranchised,—such, stated in the most general terms, was the theory of Whiggism, as propounded by Jeffrey, and as disseminated by his influence through Scotland and England.

Now, of the speculative merit of such a reproduction of the Whig theory there can be but one opinion. Jeffrey here, we believe, did a real feat of Scottish generalization, and assisted political thought for ever by the lucid expression of one stage of it. And in what stead this cardinal notion stood to Jeffrey himself, what clearness and unity of purpose it gave to all his subordinate speculations in social matters, may be seen by a reference to his numerous political and historical sketches. Farther than this, too, it cannot be denied that the notion, in his hands and in those of his Whig associates and disciples, did immense public service. Permeating the whole body of British society, it dissolved and disintegrated much of the remaining national Toryism; and as all the great political achievements of the Whig party, during the generation preceding the present—the Catholic Emancipation, the Abolition of Colonial Slavery, Economical Retrenchment, and the Reform Bill, were logical consequences of the Whig principle in the whole, so they were, doubtless, accelerated by this modification of it. If, however, we lift up the speculation itself by its roots, and examine how far it is a permanent and all-sufficing generalization in political science, we shall feel that it leaves us still in that condition of mere progress towards a final truth, which our Yankee friends describe by the term “seekers.” It might be shewn, and Jeffrey himself had a glimpse of the fact, that the whole speculation proceeds on the view that government is based on a negation. The historical origin of government, according to Jeffrey, was precisely this, that, in early communities, strong and often unscrupulous individuals grasped at the supreme power, and that the other powerful men in the community made the best terms they could with these individuals, that is, struggled in a rude way to subject the inevitable one authority to the existing multifarious power. Now, whatever truth there may be in this asser-

tion, considered as a fact in the natural history of government, it is clear that, unless something be postulated over the fact—some divine law ordaining and inhering in the fact, however it happened—some *a priori* necessity for the human race of government as such—then all government, from first to last, resolves itself into nothing more than the neutralization of one thing by another thing; of usurpation, direct or inherited, by organized resistance. Jeffrey, we think, would not have accepted this as his belief, if it had been nakedly proposed to him; but that the germs of such a belief lay in his political creed, may be inferred from his explicit statement in the foregoing passage, that he considered the merits of Parliamentary government to consist far less in its energy as an instrumentality for initiating wholesome positive laws, (in which respect, he admits, some have maintained its inferiority to Despotism,) than in its negative virtues as a means of enabling the scattered power of the nation to control its centralized executive. At all events, the belief we mention is the actual conclusion in which those who have carried out Jeffrey's principles to their logical extreme have at length ended. That all government is but an elaborate negation of the right to govern, a complicated equation the result of which is zero, a mere organized system of interferences to neutralize previous interferences; and that, consequently, the whole tendency of civilisation is to abolish Government, and to bring society to that state in which all men and women shall be so many independent self-governed atoms, and society itself a mere aggregate of such—this is the theory now creeping into vogue. Now for such as adopt this theory, Whiggism, whether as expounded by Jeffrey or by any one else, is evidently too narrow. Political duty, according to them, consists in speeding on the great consummation of No-government to which all things tend; and they are inclined to hold that the way to this is not so much through any rigorous or professed constitutionalism, as through the intervening term of democracy, or even a succession of mutually weakening struggles between democracy and despotism. Against all this another class of thinkers protest. Caring little for researches into the primeval origin of Governments, and assuming that in the modifications which Government has undergone as to form since the days of the Nimrods and the Nebuchadnezzars down to those of the Peels and the Polks, there has doubtless, as everywhere else, been a law of evolution at work, they hold that Government itself is an imperishable necessity of social existence, a specific mode or forthgoing of human energy in the associated state. They hold that society itself has a life and activity, distinct from the lives and activities of the individuals which compose it, involving these but not logically reducible into these;

and the manifestations of this general social life they regard as things of supreme import—as, in fact, the *acts of the human race* as such. Governments of all forms, accordingly, they regard as the organs of volition and expression belonging to this higher life of society, the organs whose business it specially is to cogitate at every moment what new step society shall take, what new condition it shall impose upon itself with a view to some end. Hence, instead of preferring those Governments whose excellence is chiefly negative, they are disposed to prefer those which, from their nature, abound most in positive energy—which are the readiest to seize good notions of all kinds, shape them into laws and institutions, and so work them fast up into the condition and circumstances of the people. As to the precise form of Government that would do this best, they are, however, all at sea. It may be asserted that here again, however, there is a manifest tendency to burst the walls of constitutional Whiggism. Jeffrey, indeed, persuaded himself that the form of Government which he preferred for its negative merits might also be shown to be the best in respect of sound legislative energy. But, as the sight becomes more frequent of that wreck of bills which the recess of every Parliamentary session leaves floating up and down in the public limbo, one or two small measures perhaps having been the sole product of many months—the persons in question begin to despair and to look about for new possibilities. Some, as we know, fell back upon the resolute moral desire as a refuge from the intellectual confusion: and, wishing vehemently for a wise despotism, would almost tolerate a despotism never so foolish. Others, applying themselves with a more sanguine faith to the problem of achieving the desired end without retrogression, scheme out a kind of theocratic democracy of the future, in which peoples, while governing themselves, shall be constantly pervaded by an inventive social energy, and shall to some extent commit the articulate expression of that energy to special social functionaries.

But though men may roam in deserts they must live in houses—and there are many who, though quite competent to such excursions into the regions of the intellectually extreme in politics, and even accustomed to them, still, feeling the necessity of having a roof above their heads against the wind and weather of present fact, return contentedly after every excursion to the comforts of homely Whiggism. Jeffrey himself, as his writings show, had now and then, notwithstanding his practical fidelity to this creed, occasional doubts, and wanderings, and surmises. Towards the end of his life, in particular, it seems to have been with a dazzled and hesitating eye that he looked forward into the increasing ghastliness of the European future. It is indeed

a thought-distracting, theory-upsetting, sorrow-inflicting, consistency-killing element—this element of politics and political speculation! Nowhere are fools more dogmatic, nowhere are wise men more sad and silent; nowhere are wise men and fools, folly and wisdom, commingled and confounded more inextricably. Flashes of light through firmaments of darkness; a few strong instinctive convictions, a few leading doctrinal generalities, struggling with a chaos of facts which they cannot organize—such is now the science of politics. The sun may yet shine, and truth and certainty lay claim to this region too; meanwhile men must grope. Hence again we say, it were well if men, without giving themselves political names at all, or at least without setting much store by these names, could consent to view each case as it occurred in the light of its own immediate merits—a so-called Whig now and then, for example, saying a word for what is beautiful in the antique; and a so-called Tory blowing the blast which is to dethrone a tyrant Bomba. Perhaps something of this immediate sensitiveness to right and wrong in themselves, rather than any respect for the Horatian maxim, “*in medio tutissimus*,” has been the secret of that moderation of opinion which has distinguished most genial and sagacious men who have been obliged to take part in politics—the moderate Whiggism of a Jeffrey, on the one hand; on the other, the moderate Toryism of a Scott. For modern use, indeed, one would be inclined to supplement the Horatian maxim, thus:—*In medio tutissimus ibis; in omnibus tamen rectius ages, si et extrema mediteris.*

It is like passing from the smoke and din of the town to the pure air and quietness of the country to pass from Jeffrey in his connexion with politics, to Jeffrey in his connexion with literature. Here too, we have to note as the first fact with respect to the influence which was exercised, in the person of Jeffrey, over the judgment and the feelings of Britain generally, that that influence, whether favourable or not, was Scottish. As the successive modifications of Whig doctrine during the first thirty years of this century emanated from Edinburgh, so, from the same place, and, in the pages of the same periodical, there issued a more regular, more rapid, more consistent, and more influential series of criticisms on the works of contemporary British authors than from any other place in Great Britain. The *Quarterly* and other Reviews might, in some respects, contest the palm with the *Edinburgh*, in point of literary excellence and ability during the period in question, though on this head there might be some doubts; but as a critical organ, as a recognised authority in the literary republic for its quarterly judgments on new books readers waited with respect and authors with trembling, the *Edinburgh* had no com-

petitor. There were both English and Scottish bards at that time, but there were, strictly speaking, only Scotch reviewers. Byron's lines, where he makes the genius of Caledonia address Jeffrey, whom she has just rescued from "Little's leadless pistol," are more than a satire.

"My son," she cried, "ne'er thirst for gore again,  
Resign the pistol and resume the pen ;  
O'er politics and poesy preside,  
Boast of thy country and Britannia's pride !  
For long as Albion's heedless sons submit,  
Or Scottish taste decides on English wit,  
So long shall last thine unmolested reign,  
Nor any dare to take thy name in vain."

We declare this to be but a satiric myth embodying a real fact. Somewhere about the beginning of the nineteenth century, the genius of Caledonia, residing then with her more buxom and less bony, though somewhat more matronly, sister, the genius of Albion, in the place assigned for the habitation of such entities, *did* meditate another stroke of Scottish emphasis across the general condition of Britain ; and *did*, after consulting with her sister, and obtaining her assent, (she was somewhat sleepy and in a very good humour at the time,) speed down to Scotland in search of a Scotchman fit to execute her purpose by becoming a critic of all British literature. She hovered, for some time, uncertain, over the land of her care, now glancing at the Highlands, now at the Lowlands ; at last, however, she rested, as was natural, over Edinburgh, and discerned the object of her search in the acute, fluent, penetrating little lawyer, living among his books, and at that very moment, we will suppose, reading one of them to his young wife in their small establishment in Buccleuch Place. She liked him all the better for her purpose, that he had had some experience of an English university, spoke with an English accent, and was, on the whole, of a sweet generous disposition, rather English than Scotch. And so, by agreement between the two sisters, Jeffrey was placed in the chair of British criticism, and called upon to pass his judgments both on English and Scottish authors. Sister Albion has sometimes since, we hear, repented of her share in the arrangement, and had cross words with Caledonia on the subject ; but being of the noblest temper, she admits, on the whole, that the arrangement was a good one, and that England as well as Scotland has benefited by it.

One qualification which Jeffrey possessed for the task assigned to him, in a degree greater perhaps than any other Scotchman of that time, was extensive knowledge of, and real delight in, the works which constitute, in their series, the past wealth of

English literature. Always fond of quiet domestic leisure, rather than violent modes of exercise, and always a diligent and rapid reader, he had probably gone through as large a course of reading in the standard British authors, as any of his most cultivated English contemporaries. And while our great prose-writers, whether of the more heavy and severe, or of the more light and sparkling style, had had a due share of his attention, he had still revelled with a pleasure which custom never made less, in the richer and more fantastic compositions of the older poets. Shakespeare was almost a boundless enthusiasm with him; Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton shared the second place in his regards; with the poetry of the Elizabethan era he was more than usually familiar; and he admired with a just sense of degree, the strength of Dryden, the wit and polish of Pope, the charming grace of Goldsmith, and the fervid genius of Burns. This familiarity with all varieties of literary beauty, this extensive acquaintance with the authors, who—according to a favourite phrase of his own, of which somehow we are now growing ashamed—are to be regarded as “the best models” of English literature, very soon developed, in a mind naturally both sensitive and shrewd, that peculiar aptitude for at once relishing or disliking anything new in literature, which we designate by the word *taste*. It was the *taste* of Jeffrey that constituted his special accomplishment as a critic: where that was right, he was right; where that was at fault, he was at fault. It was with this taste, the compound result in him of his native powers and tendencies, and his familiar acquaintance with the established “models,” that he came forth to meet the tide of new books which flowed in upon him from all the sources of contemporary British authorship—the Scotts, and Byrons, and Crabbes, and Campbells, and Southey's, and Wordsworths of a new and abounding era. His self-appointed task was that he, the Scotchman Jeffrey, should tell of every important new literary composition as it came out, whether he liked it or not, and what passages he liked, and what he did not like in it, and something, also, of his reasons for so liking and disliking. This, and nothing else, was the task which Jeffrey prescribed to himself as a critic.

He performed the task frankly and honestly. By nature the most “sweet-blooded” of creatures, neither malice, nor envy, nor political difference interfered to make him speak ill, where he thought well, of an author. On the other hand, neither private friendship nor political agreement prevented him from expressing a severe opinion where he thought it right to do so. He sent the proof-sheets of one of his most severe reviews of Scott to Scott himself, on the very day he was going to dine with him. Moore, with whom he fought a duel, because Moore chose to con-

strue his remarks on his *Little's Poems* into an accusation of personal profligacy, lived to be his guest at Craigcrook, and to sing songs on his lawn. Byron learnt to call him "Dear Jeffrey," and devoted a stanza of reconciliation to him in one of the cantos of *Don Juan*. And if Southey and Wordsworth never quite forgave him, this was on account of the peculiarity of the case; and the peculiarity was on their side, and not on his. The fact is, that Jeffrey's whole procedure as a critic, his eulogies on some authors, his attacks on others, his praises of one of an author's compositions, his dispraises of other compositions of the same author, his mingled praises and dispraises of one and the same book, all exhibited what was most singularly his qualification for the task he had assumed—his honest unhesitating reliance on his own taste. When we said some time ago that Jeffrey, like a falcon, looked about him with a sharp, clear, and almost too unbashful eye, what we meant to indicate was precisely this reliance on the competence of his own momentary judgment, this freedom from intellectual diffidence, this exquisite power of pronouncing a thing right or wrong, correct or incorrect, on the mere faith of his own instant sensation of it. Men differ very much in this respect. There are some men, and these often men of real energy and resolution, who possess little or nothing of this unfailing opinionativeness, and who, when a matter is presented to them for the first time, rather take it trustingly as it is given, and let themselves be passively affected by it, than meet it, as it were, at intellectual sword-point. Often, when their opinion is asked, they positively have none to give; and often, when a statement is made to them, in itself perhaps the most questionable in the world, they do not, unless it jars on some specially tender nerve, behave to it dogmatically at all, but seem rather to occupy themselves with pondering the possibilities of it. For example, when the fate of the Crystal Palace was pending, and when the one question in London, which everybody asked of everybody else, was, whether it should be kept up or removed, there were, we believe, many who, though by no means undecided when they *had* an opinion, really had no opinion whatever on this particular matter, and, therefore, could give—none. Instantly to form an opinion in such a case, by calculating all the results positive and negative on both sides—all that would happen and all that would not happen if the Palace stood, and all that would happen and all that would not happen if it were taken away—was clearly beyond the powers of the human reason; and not having either the special feelings of an exhibitor to assist a conclusion on one side, or the special feelings of a Hyde Park proprietor to assist a conclusion on the other, they were content to be opinionless, or to listen reverentially to both

opinions, or to abominate the whole subject, or perhaps at last to be talked into one of the opinions by others. So also, there are persons who, when anything in art or literature comes before them challenging their admiration, and recommended by high authority, admire it or not, as the case may be; but, if they do not admire it, will often shrink from saying so, not from caution, but from a proneness to fancy that there may be more in the thing than meets the eye. When their feelings are not deeply stirred for or against, their tendency is to be neutral, or if they must speak, to say either what is expected, or, out of revenge, the very reverse. They will even laugh sometimes when they do not see the joke, if only there is testimony to its existence. It was quite different with Jeffrey. He had none of this intellectual bashfulness, which disqualifies for affirming or denying, except on occasions when the affirmation or denial must be vehement and continuous. He met all things at intellectual sword-point, and approved or condemned, right and left, without any hesitation. Possibly his habits as a lawyer may have had something to do with this; the mere practice of criticism, likewise, strengthened the tendency to criticise; but Jeffrey was a critic by nature. Whether in politics or in literature he was ready at once with a distinct and honest judgment whenever he was asked for it. In going over the French Revolution, for example, which he has done once or twice in his political and historical papers, he alternates between praise and dispraise almost as regularly as if he had been a criticising piston; now dwelling with approbation on what he considers a great and splendid act of policy in the leaders of that movement, and again exhibiting some blunder, by which, according to his judgment, the movement was, from the first, vitiated and ruined. And so in his remarks on a novel, a play, or a poem. Generally, his good nature and his real enjoyment of literary excellence, led him to devote most space to the praise, when it was possible to praise at all; but there is also almost invariably an enumeration at the end of blemishes or defects; and sometimes in one and the same page, or even in one and the same sentence, the author is lauded highly for his merits and blamed severely for his faults. This character in your novel is good and natural, that absurd and unnatural; this poem in your collection is beautiful and striking, that tame and mawkish; this image in the verse is highly poetical, that extravagant and obscure:—such, allowing for the larger space usually assigned to the praise, was Jeffrey's invariable mode of addressing the subjects of his criticism. Let us illustrate this by a quotation or two taken at random.

*On Byron's Tragedies.*—"Considered as poems, we confess they appear to us to be rather heavy, verbose, and inelegant—deficient in the

passion and energy which belong to the other writings of the noble author—and still more in the richness of imagery, the originality of thought, and the sweetness of versification for which he used to be distinguished. They are for the most part solemn, prolix, and ostentatious, lengthened out by large preparations for catastrophes which never arrive, and tantalising us with slight specimens and glimpses of a higher interest, scattered thinly up and down many weary pages of declamation. . . . There are some sweet lines and many of great weight and energy; but the general march of the verse is cumbrous and unmusical. His lines do not vibrate like polished lances, at once strong and light, in the hands of his persons, but are wielded like clumsy batons in a bloodless affray. Instead of the graceful familiarity and idiomatical melodies of Shakespeare, they are apt, too, to fall into clumsy prose in their approaches to the easy and colloquial style; and, in the loftier passages, are occasionally deformed by low and common images that harmonize but ill with the general solemnity of the diction.”—*Edinburgh Review*, 1822.

*On Scott's Lay of the Last Minstrel.*—“From the various extracts we have now given our readers will be enabled to form a tolerably correct judgment of this poem; and if they are pleased with those portions of it which have now been exhibited, we may venture to assure them that they will not be disappointed by the perusal of the whole. The whole night journey of Delorane, the opening of the wizard's tomb, the march of the English battle, and the parley before the walls of the castle, are all executed with the same spirit and poetical energy which we think is conspicuous in the specimens we have already extracted, and a great variety of short passages occur in every part of the poem, which are still more striking and meritorious, though it is impossible to detach them, without injury, in the form of a quotation. . . . There are many passages, as we have already insinuated, which have the general character of heaviness, such as the minstrel's account of his preceptor and Delorane's lamentation over the dead body of Musgrave. But the goblin page is, in our opinion, the capital deformity of the poem. We have already said that the whole machinery is useless; but the magic studies of the lady, and the rifled tomb of Michael Scott, give occasion to such admirable poetry that we can, on no account, consent to part with them. The page, on the other hand, is a perpetual burden to the poet and to the reader; it is an undignified and improbable fiction, which excites neither terror, admiration, nor astonishment, but needlessly debases the strain of the whole work, and excites at once our incredulity and contempt.”—*Edinburgh Review*, 1805.

*On Keats's Poems.*—“We had never happened to see either of these volumes till very lately, and have been exceedingly struck with the genius they display and the spirit of poetry which breathes through all their extravagance. . . . They are full of extravagance and irregularity, rash attempts at originality, interminable wanderings, and excessive obscurity. . . . But they are flushed all over with the rich lights of fancy, and so coloured and bestrewed with the flowers of

poetry, that even when perplexed and bewildered in their labyrinths it is impossible to resist the intoxication of their sweetness, or to shut our hearts to the enchantments they so lavishly present. . . . The thin and scanty tissue of his story (*Endymion*) is merely the light framework on which his florid wreaths are suspended; and while his imaginations go rambling and entangling themselves everywhere, like wild honeysuckles, all idea of sober reason, and plan, and consistency, is utterly forgotten and ‘strangled in their waste fertility.’ A great part of the work, indeed, is written in the strangest and most fantastical manner that can be imagined. It seems as if the author had ventured everything that had occurred to him in the shape of a glittering image or striking expression—taken the first word that presented itself to make up a rhyme, and then made that word the germ of a new cluster of images—a hint for a new excursion of the fancy—and so wandered on, equally forgetful whence he came and heedless whither he was going, till he had covered his pages with an interminable arabesque of connected and incongruous figures, that multiplied as they extended, and were only harmonized by the brightness of their tints and the graces of their forms. In this rash and headlong career he has, of course, many lapses and failures. There is no work, accordingly, from which a malicious critic could cull more matter for ridicule, or select more obscure, unnatural, or absurd passages. But it is, in truth, at least as full of genius as of absurdity.”—*Edinburgh Review*, 1820.

*On a Number of Dickens's Copperfield.*—“Bless you, my dear Dickens, and happy new-years for centuries to you and yours! A thousand thanks for your kind letter of December, and for your sweet, soothing *Copperfield* of the new-year. It is not a hinging or marking chapter in the story of the Life, but it is full of good matter, and we are all the better for it. The scene with Agnes is the most impressive, though there is much promise in Traddles. Uriah is too disgusting; and I confess I should have been contented to have heard no more of the Micawbers. But there is no saying what *you* may make of them.”—*Letter to Mr. Dickens*, Jan. 6, 1850.—*Lord Cockburn's Life*, vol. ii. pp. 464, 465.

These extracts, though, with the exception of that on Keats, which is really a fine piece of meaning finely expressed, they do not illustrate sufficiently Jeffrey's powers as a writer—the delicacy and tact of his discrimination, his clear and genial wit, and his happy fluency in choice and garnished and lightly moving phrases—yet convey an exact and adequate idea of his manner as a critic. The “beauty and blemish principle,” if we may so express it, was the principle of criticism in the application of which to the writings of his day Jeffrey was a master. To point out the special beauties of a poem or novel, to append or interweave an enumeration of the special blemishes, and to illustrate both by ample and appropriate extracts—this was the standing formula according to which almost all the critical papers in the

*Edinburgh Review* were written, during the editorship of Jeffrey. It was the organ for telling society at large, and ladies and gentlemen of taste in particular, what they were to think of the last new books. It performed on the large scale, and with a kind of princely decisiveness to which there is nothing now comparable, that important social function which smaller periodicals now attempt to discharge, when, for example, they consult public convenience by answering, *ex cathedra*, the question so often put at private parties, "What do you think of the new number of *Bleak House*?" As readers of the present day, and especially those unopinionative readers who are apt to take *Bleak House* or anything else as it comes, without making up their minds in any distinct manner as to its merits or demerits, owe a debt of gratitude to the smaller periodicals which point these out; so, in the first quarter of this century, and in a degree a hundred times greater, were readers indebted to the *Edinburgh Review*. To pronounce judgments on new books and to disseminate Whig principles, were the two professed ends of the Review; and as its fidelity to the one end was undoubted, so no one could deny the vigilance with which it attended to the other.

It is a known fact, however, exemplified nowhere more conspicuously than in the progress of the *Edinburgh Review* itself, that the sketchy "beauty and blemish" species of criticism in which Jeffrey excelled, has now passed out of date, and been succeeded, at least in all our higher periodicals, by a kind of criticism intrinsically deeper and more laborious. Partly by reason of that enormous increase of books which has made it a physical necessity to devolve the task of general literary censorship upon the weekly periodicals, and even on the daily newspapers; partly by reason of the rise among us of an altogether higher sense of what criticism is, or may be—the papers which now constitute the staple of our magazines and quarterlies are of a kind of which similar periodicals in older times exhibit few or no examples. It is not, perhaps, at least it is not in all cases, that there is greater positive ability than formerly in those who betake themselves to this species of writing—for it would be no easy thing to find a person in any class or any profession with a greater fund of talent available for any purpose whatever than existed in Jeffrey; it is that the new principle which usage has, since Jeffrey's time, established in the art of periodical writing, compels those who betake themselves to it, be their abilities what they may, to task these abilities harder. Merely to note the beauties and blemishes of a new book, or the merits and defects of a known author in that rapid superficial way which enables the public to say whether the book or author has been noticed favourably or otherwise, is not now the business of a

critic in the Quarterlies. What is usually required of him is, either some original disquisition, for which a book or a certain number of books may furnish the test; or some critical appreciation of a new intellectual tendency running through simultaneous scores of books, several of which are named by way of specimen; or, some thorough dissection of an important new book, considered as the product of a peculiar mode of thought exhibited nowhere else; or, lastly, and perhaps most frequently, some elaborate literary monograph, or study of character, in which the attempt is made to delineate in exact portraiture the features of some representative man, and to trace the stamp of these in his writings or the circumstances of his life. It is needless, in illustration of this change in the nature of our periodical literature, to do more than allude to those occasional essays of Macaulay and Carlyle, which, if they did not assist to bring about the change, at least mark, in a very striking manner, that a change has taken place. Side by side with the republished contributions of these and some later writers to our periodical literature, Jeffrey's reprinted criticisms appear slight and ephemeral. The truth is, that his literary criticisms rank lower, in point of thought or permanent intellectual contents, than his political articles. In these articles, as we have seen, there is often a marked tendency to general speculation, a successful effort to reach a scientific principle. There is far less of this in his literary criticisms. General disquisition, indeed, is not wanting, and leading canons of taste are duly implied or laid down; but, on the whole, the papers have the appearance of light things dashed off on the "beauty and blemish" principle, by a brilliant and happy writer, whose simple business it was to read new books and tell the public frankly what he thought of them. Considered as such, however—as criticisms of the hour—as the applications of one man's taste and judgment, sometimes in the form of reproof and chastisement, to the whole current literature of his generation—we have no series of criticisms approaching to them in merit. Jeffrey, in this sense, was truly the king of critics. If he has not left behind him more solid monuments of his own literary genius, it is because, like a true king, he occupied himself so assiduously with the task of governing and controlling—of administering, as it were, day by day, portions of his individuality into the course of affairs as they were. That, while performing this task so well, he was able at the same time to sustain the character of being himself a fine and graceful writer, is so much merit in addition. Slight as the texture of Jeffrey's criticisms is, there are passages in them of such happy and ingenious and even rich and eloquent expression, that no series of "Elegant Extracts" would now be complete that did not contain

specimens from them, as a recognised portion of our classic British literature.

Whatever may be thought of the *depth* of Jeffrey's criticisms, it must be allowed that, on the whole, they were singularly *just*. There have been, we imagine, very few men so courageous in giving opinions on things, whose opinions on things could be more fully trusted, when given. Even his critical observations on historical transactions, so distant and difficult to appreciate as those of the first French Revolution, were probably as sound as it was possible for critical observations of that nature to be. And his literary criticisms, for the most part, stand good even yet. The opinions pronounced by Jeffrey thirty or forty years ago on the works of Scott, Byron, Campbell, Crabbe, Moore, Keats, Rogers, and all the other literary chiefs of that period, are, for the most part, the opinions that people hold on the same works now; and some of the very phrases which Jeffrey used to describe his impressions as to what was characteristic in these writers, have now all the sanction of prescriptive usage. Lord Cockburn is very decided upon this point. "What poet," he asks, "whom Jeffrey condemns, continues a favourite with the public, except in the works, or in the passages, or in the qualities which he applauds?" We cannot, however, go *quite* so far as Lord Cockburn when he says this. Although Jeffrey's judgments on the poets and other writers of his time were, on the whole, as accurate as they were frank, there *are* cases in which the public has found it necessary to leave him and his criticisms far behind. Every man has his natural limitations; and there are things contemporary with every man, according to external appearance, which properly are *not* contemporary with him, but indicate preparations by nature for the future, and her tendency towards what shall be in vigour and flourish when he shall have passed away. Jeffrey, by nature, had probably more of sympathy with what was fine, and exquisite, and pathetic in literature, in its already established forms, than with what, either in thought or in method, proposed an innovation; and although the range of his intellectual appreciation was large when he directed his attention to the past, there were deep tendencies of his own time towards which, with a pertinacity which at once gave the measure of his intelligence, and shewed its strength within that measure, he remained entirely negative. It is needless to do more than allude, in illustration of this, to his criticism on Goethe in connexion with the novel of *Wilhem Meister*, and to his long series of attacks on Wordsworth and the Lake Poets. The "This will never do" which, in both these cases, was substantially his critical verdict, can now only be regarded as an interesting example of the old in literature perturbed by the ap-

proach of the new. There are of course persons yet amongst us to whom Jeffrey's verdict in those cases seems still the right one; but for all who properly belong to our epoch, the question has been long ago ended.

The truth is, a new spirit in literature, as well as in other things, was taking possession of the age as Jeffrey passed away from it. Influences akin to those which Jeffrey resisted in his attacks on Coleridge and Wordsworth, streamed in on the mind of Britain from all sides; and before Jeffrey died he saw a very changed world. From the peaceful retreat at Craigcrook, where he spent his declining years, leading in the circle of his private friends that kindly, and sociable, and pensive home-life, of which Lord Cockburn has told us too little, but of which we obtain some beautiful and charming glimpses from his own letters, Jeffrey must have looked out with mingled feelings of surprise, admiration, and regret upon the tide of new things that time and labour were evoking all around him. In politics, a new French Revolution, a whole continent once more defying despotism, and speculations of far deeper colour than the authentic old buff and blue, came in the end to assure him—more profoundly and convincingly perhaps than he had been assured before—that men will not suffer Whiggism to be the final formula in political science. And in literature, he stood at last like a Nestor amid the warriors of a second and third generation. The Scotts, the Byrons, the Campbells, the Crabbes, the Coleridges, the Southey's, the Moores, the Mackintoshes, and the Rogerses, who were properly his contemporaries, had either passed away or taken out their superannuation; Wordsworth, whom he had attacked, was the poet-patriarch of England, removed high beyond all critical reach; the power and the glory of British literature had passed to chiefs trained within the period of his own activity—the Wilsons, and Carlyles, and Hunts, and Landors, and Macaulays, and Brewsters, and Stephens, and Hamiltons, who still live and labour among us; year after year a new name, such as that of Bulwer, or Isaac Taylor, or Dickens, or Thackeray, or Jerrold, or Tennyson, or Robert Chambers, or Hugh Miller, or John Mill, was added, before his eyes, to the list of our men of intellectual and literary eminence; and as he looked still farther along the series for what was appearing or about to be, he could discern, as of greater or less note, and of various promise, in a generation still younger, such men as Stanley, and Ruskin, and Samuel Brown, and Wilkinson, and George Wilson, and Marston, and Lewes, and Aytoun, and Kingsley, and Browning, and Patmore. Genial, and lively, and sympathetic as he was, he saw all this with a kindly and genuine interest, and with the readiest approbation of whatever was good

and beautiful. "Oh, my dear, dear Dickens!" he writes, after the receipt of one of the Numbers of *Dombey*, "what a No. 1 you have given us! I have so cried and sobbed over it last night and again this morning; and felt my heart purified by those tears and blessed and loved you for making me shed them, and I never can bless and love you enough." The heart that could feel so for the death of Paul Dombey had clearly lost none of its susceptibility to the charms of fine literature. But the pathos of *Dombey* is not the spirit of the age; and at the time when Jeffrey wrote these words, he cannot but have felt that *his* day was in the past and that it had fallen to men very different from himself to do the work required by the new time.

Jeffrey, as all know, has not been the last representative of Scottish influence in British literature. He is not to be regarded as holding even the penultimate or the antepenultimate place in the series of eminent Scotchmen. Chalmers and Carlyle properly come after him; Sir William Hamilton, in the field of metaphysics, more than maintains, at this very day, the ancient honours of his country; in Hugh Miller, Scotland has still a son, with features peculiarly her own, of whose manly heart and of whose deeds in literature, any country might be proud and even in Jeffrey's own field of literary criticism, have we not had, since Jeffrey's time, a totally different display of the Scottish genius in Christopher North and *Blackwood's Magazine*. Scottish emphasis still reigns and works as a specific element in all British thought, all British activity, and all British literature. Nay, and there will still be stroke after stroke of Scottish emphasis till Scotland shall be no more, or till, all things having been finally and for ever co-ordinated, the necessity for emphasis shall cease. But nature abhors repetitions, and every new stroke of Scottish emphasis must tell athwart British society as an impulse different in kind from all that preceded it. And so more particularly, with whatever Scotland may yet undertake in the field of literary criticism. The *Edinburgh Review*, if it is true, has ceased to be, in any distinctive manner, a Scottish periodical; but Scotland, we believe, may still have, and still needs to have, a periodical of her own. Let us not be mistaken: we speak in no spirit of vain ultra-Scotticism. While it will necessarily, we believe, be the function of such a periodical, with respect to England, to emphasise certain things which it is given to Scotchmen rather than to Englishmen at the present day to know and to appreciate; it will necessarily also, we believe, be its function, with respect to Scotland, to make war on the excesses of emphasis itself, to attack bad emphasis, and to teach, by manifold allusion to what exists so splendidly in England, the beauty and grandeur of that character which accepts all things in mild and harmonious co-ordination.

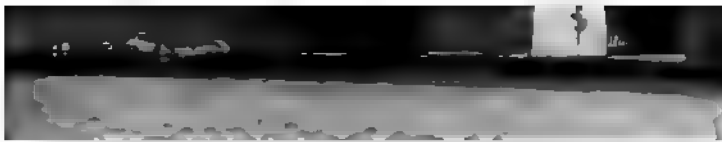


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Heats







Ch. Kingsley



the superficial traits and conventional peculiarities, however striking, of men and manners, but to grapple in earnest, and in a deep moral spirit, with the great riddle of human life. For it cannot be deemed an intrusion into the sacred precincts of religion—it is a very different thing from the controversies of so-called religious novels—it is of almost inestimable importance as subsidiary to the dogmatic teaching of creeds and commandments, for the novelist to throw what light he can on the strength and weakness of the heart of man, and to suggest how his affections and passions may best be cultivated to the true purpose of his being. It is not too much to say, that the novelist has it in his power to bring medicine to the soul; to aid in soothing its perplexities and regrets; to animate its flagging energies. Even to those persons who decry novels as frivolous, it must be obvious, that they testify to the drift of the literature of the day—“*vento paleæ jactantur inanes.*” Much more may those, who regard novels as no inadequate vehicle of precious truths, rejoice in their present tone. And this congratulation applies to the *Scotch* novels under our notice, with especial emphasis. We do not mean to imply that there is any very strong contradistinction between the literature on this side and on that side of the Border. Will anyone deny, that there is almost as much difference between the northern and southern counties of England, as between *Scotch* and *English* at the present day? With such incessant intercourse as now exists, especially among the literary, between North and South Britain, it would indeed be strange if the literature of the one district did not keep pace with the other, either for improvement or the reverse. Nevertheless, each nation has its own appropriate contribution to bring to the common fund. Difference of race, difference in the system of education, the accumulated inheritance of customs and traditions transmitted from age to age, and, in the Highlands, the additional difference arising from the remains here and there of the old patriarchal *régime*—all this gives an unmistakable individuality. Nor will any thoughtful observer, however anxious for the closest amity and reciprocal influence in progressive civilisation, desire such characteristics to be effaced. There is quite enough that is distinctively *Scotch* about the novels in question, to give the relish of novelty to the *English* reader; and, we venture to predict, that such readers will not be least ready to confess their obligations, not for amusement merely, but of a more solid kind; after dwelling for awhile in thought among the primitive simplicities of homely life, which still linger in the bracing air and stern scenery of Scotland, and listening to the practical wisdom, stamped with the marks of a grave and conscientious temperament, for which her children have always been remarkable.

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- ART. VI.—1. *The Saint's Tragedy; or, The True Story of Elizabeth of Hungary, Landgravine of Thuringia, Saint of the Romish Calendar.* By CHARLES KINGSLEY, Junior, Rector of Eversley. With a Preface by Professor MAURICE. Second Edition. London, 1851.
2. *Twenty-Five Village Sermons.* By CHARLES KINGSLEY, Junior, Rector of Eversley, Hants, and Canon of Middleham, Yorkshire. London, 1849.
3. *The Message of the Church to Labouring Men: a Sermon, preached at St. John's Church, Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square. (June 22, 1851.)* By CHARLES KINGSLEY, Jun., Rector of Eversley. London, 1851.

THE "Saint's Tragedy" and the "Village Sermons" of Mr. Kingsley have been before the public for so considerable a time, that, having been prevented from bestowing on them earlier notice, we may be thought precluded from making them the subjects of remark. It might have been so were they writings in a more popular form, and thus likely to obtain a rapid circulation; but it so happens that neither a tragedy nor a volume of sermons belongs to the most generally attractive class of books. Unless either the reputation of its author, or some extrinsic circumstance, direct attention peculiarly to it, a tragedy, even of decided merit, may in these days easily escape the notice of all but a few; and of sermons, it may be said, that the individual species are often supposed, with much reason, to have a very limited *habitat*, and to be regarded with little interest out of their native region. We are now glad to make the publication of a second edition of the tragedy the occasion of offering some remarks upon the two works whose titles we have placed first at the head of this Article.

An interesting, and, it must be admitted, an important question is naturally enough suggested by a volume of sermons from the author of a dramatic poem. The question is, What sort of sermons are we to look for from a poet? or, in other words, What relation does the gift of poesy bear to the gift of preaching? It can hardly be necessary for us here to premise, that in using such language we have regard only to the natural endowments or intellectual capacities and tendencies of the preacher; the deep inward and spiritual life, of which, in all true preaching, these are but the organs and exponents, we well know to be confined, thank God! to no single form of mental structure, nor stage of growth.

To the question which we have thus ventured to propose, we

believe the answers given by any considerable number of readers would indicate by no means unanimity. To many, what cannot be formally called sacred in science or literature, still seems profane, and the field over which it is permitted to the Christian to range a very narrow one; for the heresy by which reason is divorced from religion still lives and does its work,—fatal to each, because neither singly, but only both in union, can be productive of any worthy offspring. It is probably not without reason that Mr. Maurice, in the valuable preface by which his friend's tragedy is introduced, anticipates from some quarters serious blame to any clergyman who shall write a true drama, exhibiting human beings engaged in some earnest struggle, even while the privilege of expressing his own thoughts, sufferings, and sympathies in any form of verse may be easily conceded to him.

That such views should still linger among us, will hardly surprise any who have considered how low an estimate had come to be entertained of poetry, and particularly of the drama. Poetry, which had from the beginning given, as it will doubtless to the end continue to give, expression to the deepest, the highest, the holiest of human thoughts, had come to be regarded as something almost too trivial even for the most vacant hour; and the tragedy, which exhibits the fateful struggle of man with circumstance or with himself, terrible in its aspects, momentous in its issues, the elder drama teaching of the fightings without, the christian rather of fightings within, had lost all significance for an age in which the struggle itself was all but disregarded, or counted as childish enthusiasm. In determining how far the required qualities of a poet, and more particularly of a tragic poet, are also the required qualities of a preacher, it will be necessary to consider in succession their respective functions. What is implied in being a poet? what in being a preacher? We are not here forgetting, that in thus stating the question we seem, in words at least, to be comparing things which do not admit of comparison; the word poet being expressive of peculiar mental structure and powers, the word preacher merely meaning the holder of a recognised office. Of course it is not in this sense that we use the latter word, when thus comparing the two functions. It would indeed be well for us if all whose office it is to preach had, in a much larger degree than with truth can be said of them in any of the Churches, the appropriate endowments; and for our present purpose we shall term preachers only those who have these endowments in such considerable measure as to make it possible for us to compare them with poets.

In saying of the Drama that it essentially represents a struggle, it is implied that the dramatist must be in possession of some

form of earnestness; for he must have had the means of first representing to himself, through sympathy, the contest which he is able effectively to depict. The general truth of this remark will be admitted, although certain modern dramas (Goethe's, for instance) would seem to lead to the conclusion that it is liable to some exceptions, there being those who can achieve through sheer force of intellect, a result which is attained by others only through a deeper sympathy. In one way or other, at least, the tragic author must be able to express, with a power peculiar to himself, human desires and passions, and that not merely singly, but in their mutual relations; for he represents them not in the abstract, but in the concrete form, and has to produce men, not monsters. The concrete form of all true poetry will explain to us how great poets have been also men of practical sagacity in the management of affairs, which cannot be said of abstract thinkers; and if we regard the Germans as the most highly gifted in the latter respect, but comparatively poorly endowed in the former, the political incapacity which is now grieving all right-minded men may perhaps be traced to a foundation deeper than the long want of appropriate institutions. Perhaps no better instance could be chosen of the falseness of popular judgments on such matters than the very common one of regarding poets as capable only of dreams, and therefore powerful only in dreamland, but having, in truth, no work to do on this solid earth. Looking only at the sensitive poetical temperament, but not at the informing mind which lies under it, perhaps one might easily fall into the mistake, which yet a little thought might as easily correct. Either the study of any of the great poems, or the history of their authors, would lead us to a better conclusion. What piece of business will it be supposed that Shakspeare could not have transacted? Surely he could have done all that he has enabled his embodied conceptions (called with perfect propriety in one sense his creatures) to do. Cardinal Wolsey, for instance, the sumptuous Wiseman of those days, looks very like a man who knew something of this world—of men, their strength, weakness, motives, subjection to management; or going up into higher regions, what form of social agency is there which is not better seen in these pages than almost anywhere else? It did not, indeed, happen to be Shakspeare's particular work to transact in great affairs, but he managed the Globe Theatre at least successfully, which sufficed him. Dante, Milton, and Goethe, to name no more, were all men of affairs. Our readers will not extend these remarks to other departments of poetry than the epic and the dramatic; although even among the lesser poets might be found something corroborative of our views. We have been the more anxious to call attention to this prac-

tical sagacity as a poetical faculty, because it will be seen to have much value for our present purpose, and because it is often overlooked.

As the dramatic poet must have much knowledge of Man, so also of Nature. "All language," it has been said, "is symbolical;" certainly much of it is so, and Mr. Emerson has well written that "Nature is an interpreter by whose means man converses with his fellow-men." It is only an intimate relation and a close familiarity with Nature that enables the poet to find the proper symbols of his thoughts, and thus to import from Nature into language what shall in future become current coin, the worth of which is well known and generally recognised. But a poet must not only import the new; he must also use the old with a peculiar unequalled significance. This is attained by the same innate sense of their fitness and relation to things by which he appropriates the new, and without the possession of this delicate indescribable faculty seems unattainable. Study will do much, but no man can study himself into being a poet. Most men and women may be taught to write verses—many to write them with great facility; not a few to write what will win for them the applause and wonder of their little circle; but the old saw still stands impregnable—"Nascitur, non fit, poeta." Besides being much else to him, Nature is thus the poet's vocabulary; and when intently gazing and supposed to be dreaming, he may, in fact, be looking for a word. In poetry, then, as we have perhaps the earliest, so we have the latest and highest form of human speech. Scientific speech is but partial, and of the understanding—abstract, with no human sympathies; but whenever the whole being is moved and would express itself, the language is poetical.

Of the pervading formative idea in all true poems, of the reverence which seems essential to poets of the higher class, and of a hundred other things which our readers have learned to associate with the writings of these "our first of men," we have no need to write here; enough if we have given them a few examples of the kind of qualities we mean to make use of in our present argument,—and so let them conceive of the Poet.

Before turning to the other branch of our inquiry, a few words may be said on the nature of the particular drama which has given occasion to these remarks, for the sake of such of our readers as may have no acquaintance with that distinguished poem.

In the Saint's Tragedy, Mr. Kingsley has attempted to exhibit some of the most interesting and important features of life as it existed in the Middle Ages; the period referred to being the first half of the thirteenth century. The most pro-

minent of these are well expressed in the following passage of the introduction :—

“In deducing fairly, from the phenomena of her life, the character of Elizabeth, she necessarily became a type of two great mental struggles of the Middle Age ; first, of that between Scriptural or unconscionable, and Popish or conscious purity : in a word, between innocence and prudery ; next of the struggle between healthy human affection, and the Manichean contempt with which a celibate clergy would have all men regard the names of husband, wife, and parent. To exhibit this latter falsehood in its miserable consequences, when received into a heart of insight and determination sufficient to follow out all belief to its ultimate practice, is the main object of my poem. That a most degrading and agonizing contradiction on these points must have existed in the mind of Elizabeth, and of all who with similar characters shall have found themselves under similar influences, is a necessity that must be evident to all who know anything of the deeper affections of men. In the idea of a married Romish saint, these miseries should follow logically from the Romish view of human relations. In Elizabeth's case their existence is proved equally logically from the acknowledged facts of her conduct.”

This may be termed the leading idea of the play. The story into which it has woven itself rests, at all important points, on a distinct historical basis ; and is, in the main, as follows :—Elizabeth, daughter of the King of Hungary, had been in childhood betrothed to Lewis, Landgrave of Thuringia, to whose court she had been duly brought “with vessels of gold, silver baths, jewels, and *pillows all of silk.*” When the play opens, she had arrived at womanhood ; and the bestowal of her ardent affections on Lewis had prepared the way for their marriage, which soon follows. In Lewis, the enthusiastic, devout, sympathetic Elizabeth found a generous, knightly, affectionate husband ; but not one in whom her deeper feelings could find repose or direction. For this was required an intellectual and spiritual cultivation which belonged not to him, nor, with rare exceptions, to the most accomplished of his order. The spiritual guidance which he could not afford she received from Conrad of Marpurg, a monk, the Pope's Commissioner for the suppression of heresy ; who is, excepting Elizabeth, the most important character in the play. In Conrad is exhibited the struggle between the intuitive direction of a true and noble mind, and that imposed upon it by a corrupt and debasing ecclesiastical system, by which the highest human relations are disowned and dishonoured. It is a key to some of the most distinguished and apparently anomalous characters in history, such as Dunstan, Becket, and Dominic, “whom,” as Mr. Kingsley justly says, “if we hate we shall never understand, while we shall be but too likely, in our own way, to copy them.”

By nature capable of the highest enjoyment of married life, hardly has Elizabeth tasted its rich blessedness when the subtle tempter, who has undertaken to make her a "saint," suggests the impurity of that union, which for us symbolizes all that is highest; and teaching that "*sister*" is a holier name than "*wife*," thus plants a worm in the bud which had else matured to full flower and fruitage. Five years of life thus divided between the husband and the priest—between the true purity which God would have and the counterfeit by which the Church supplanted it—having passed over Elizabeth, with watchings, and fastings, and ceaseless labourings among the meanest of the poor and in the most menial offices, she was left a widow. Lewis had joined the crusade (A.D. 1227) to Palestine, which he never reached, having died of fever at Otranto. Insults and cruel hardships were now heaped on her. She was driven from her castle, and with her two children left to wander houseless, exposed to hunger and bitter frost. Intent on making her perfect, according to his idea, Conrad removed from her her "carnal" children, and persisted in adding day by day to the load of suffering under which her macerated body at last gave way; her imagination being alternately excited with the strongest spiritual stimulants, and allayed with intolerable servitude. Amid dreams, and visions, and ravings she died, a wonder-working saint; and through the efforts of her director was duly canonized, on credible evidence of her saintly life, and of the miracles wrought by her holy relics. Thus lives Elizabeth; distinguished in history as a favoured patron of the poor. Conrad, in admitted violation of historical fact, is represented as hardly surviving her; having been, as was the case, put to death by some of the nobles and peasants whose wives and children he had burned as heretics.

This mere outline of the story, in which none of the subordinate characters have been even named, must have suggested to our readers the extreme difficulty of treatment inherent in the subject. It will probably seem to some of them that, to quote from the preface by Mr. Maurice, "in certain passages and scenes the author has been a little too bold for the taste and temper of this age;" and there are those who on this ground have deemed the subject unfit for dramatic treatment, a judgment in which we do not coincide. The author could not, of course, but be sensible of this difficulty of "satisfying at once the delicacy of the English mind, and that historic truth which the highest art demands," (*Notes*, p. 248;) and he refers "those who may be shocked at certain expressions in this poem, borrowed from the Romish devotional school, to the Romish booksellers, who find just now a rapidly increasing sale for such ware."

While it might be too much to say that Mr. Kingsley has

altogether overcome this difficulty, it may be said that he has at least combated it manfully and with no small success; this his first dramatic poem being a work of much promise and of undoubted genius; in which, with a strict regard to historical truth, the spirit of the age to which it relates is so embodied as to leave on the mind of the reader a very definite and lasting impression. In some of the dialogues and soliloquies there is much power; but the excellence of the lyrical passages is the most remarkable. Some of these are exceedingly beautiful. Take, for example, that with which the Drama opens, sung by Elizabeth sitting on the steps of a closed rural chapel.

“ Baby, Jesus, who dost lie  
Far above that stormy sky,  
In thy mother's pure caress,  
Stoop, and save the motherless.

“ Happy birds! whom Jesus leaves  
Underneath his sheltering eaves;  
There they go to play and sleep;  
May not I go in and weep?

“ All without is mean and small,  
All within is vast and tall;  
All without is harsh and shrill,  
All within is hushed and still.

“ Jesus, let me enter in,  
Wrap me safe from noise and sin,  
Let me list the angels' songs,  
See the picture of Thy wrongs:

“ Let me kiss Thy wounded feet,  
Drink Thine incense faint and sweet,  
While the clear bells call Thee down  
From Thine everlasting throne!

“ At thy door-step low I bend,  
Who have neither kin nor friend;  
Let me here a shelter find—  
Shield the shorn lamb from the wind.

“ Jesu, Lord, my heart will break;  
Save me for Thy great love's sake!”

As another example we may refer to the chorus of crusaders, in the eleventh scene of the second act.

Of the more passionate dramatic passages it is difficult to find one which will at all bear removal from its proper place in the play, but the following may be quoted from the fourth act. It is Elizabeth's soliloquy in a convent chapel, where she had been left to ponder the proposed withdrawal of her children from all her care for the future.

" *Elizabeth.* Give up his children? Why, I'd not give up  
 A lock of hair, a glove his hand had hallowed;  
 They are his gift, his pledge, his flesh and blood,  
 Tossed off for my ambition! Ah, my husband!  
 His ghost's sad eyes upbraid me! Spare me, spare me!  
 I'd love thee still, if I dared; but I fear God.  
 And shall I never more see loving eyes  
 Look into mine until my dying day?  
 That's this world's bondage: Christ would have me free;  
 And 'twere a pious deed to cut myself  
 The last, last strand, and fly: but whither? whither?  
 What if I cast away the bird i' the hand,  
 And found none in the bush? 'Tis possible—  
 . . . . . No, there's worse than that.  
 What if He but sat still and let me be?  
 And these deep sorrows, which my vain conceit  
 Calls chastenings, meant for me—my ailment's cure—  
 Were lessons for some angels far away,  
 And I the *corpus vile* for the experiment?  
 The grinding of the sharp and pitiless wheels  
 Of some high Providence, which had its main-spring  
 Ages ago, and ages hence its end?  
 That were too horrible—  
 To have torn up the roses from my garden,  
 And planted thorns instead; to have forged my griefs,  
 And hugged the griefs I dared not forge; made earth  
 A hell for hope of heaven; and after all,  
 These homeless moors of life toiled through, to wake,  
 And find blank nothing! Is that angel world  
 A gaudy window, which we paint ourselves  
 To hide the dead void night beyond? The present?  
 Why here's the present—like this arched gloom,  
 It hems our blind souls in, and roofs them over  
 With adamant vault, whose only voice  
 Is our wild prayer's echo; and our future?  
 It rambles out in endless aisles of mist,  
 The farther still the darker—Oh, my Saviour!  
 My God, where art Thou!" . . . . .

We have no space for farther quotations; and with this slight  
 notice of the Saint's Tragedy we shall now revert to our argument,  
 of which we have to take up the second part, by inquiring into  
 some of the constitutive peculiarities of the Preacher.

When it is asked, then, on the other hand, What is the  
 preacher? one feels inclined to respond, What is he not? Is  
 there any physical, mental, or moral endowment which may not  
 be brought into his service? An imposing person, a rich musical  
 voice, a glittering eye that holds one, fitting artistic gesture;  
 whatever helps or makes the orator, does not the same also help

or make the preacher? That one may be an orator in the pulpit, whether that pulpit be such an one as the first we read of, the "tower of wood" from which Ezra expounded to the people standing round him in the Watergate-street of Jerusalem the long-forgotten law; or some appropriated humble implement, a cart or a barrel; or one of the "stones that name the underlying dead,"—in Wesley's case a father's grave,—over and around which a devout people, with much pains, are gathered to hear; or, as in our days usually, be a comfortable velvet-cushioned box, from which the speaker, distinguished by a classical gown, discourses to an audience as comfortably circumstanced as himself, while they rest in square or oblong boxes, ingeniously contrived, in defiance of apostolical denunciations, to prevent any possible contact with "vulgar brethren." From any of these it may be an orator who speaks; and the character of the oratory may have an appreciable relation to the nature of the pulpit.

This leads to an interesting inquiry. We remember a remark made by a friend, as we came out of church, after hearing a sermon by one of the most distinguished of our living preachers; "I have been thinking," he said, "how impossible it is to be at once an orator and a teacher." It is, we believe, perfectly true that the two functions are essentially opposed, although the same speaker may exercise each in succession; and it explains the fact that the hearers of sermons are in this divided into two classes, with contrary desires and judgments. Those who love oratory praise the orator; those who love teaching the teacher; while there are some whose rule it is to hear the orator now and then, but habitually to resort to the teacher. If it be asked to what extent there is room for oratory, speaking strictly, in the pulpit, our answer will assign to it a limited sphere. The immediate object of the orator is specific action; and indeed so directly does speech, in this instance, lead to action, that it seems rather action than words. Without understanding this we shall hardly appreciate or even admit the truth of the great Greek orator's thrice-told injunction, according to which *delivery* is everything; for what is plainly untrue of speech in general may be quite true of the kind of speech called oratory. Whenever the object of a speech is to produce a definite action it may come within this class; and the more immediately the action is to follow, the more successful, relatively, will be the oration. Where the action to follow is inevitably postponed, or is of its nature continuous and enduring, it is usual to make use of an oath or pledge, taken under the influence of the oration, before the judgment has had time to resume its sovereignty; feeling and the orator's power still predominating. Peter the Hermit's preaching of the

Crusaders, and Father Matthew's of Temperance, may be taken as examples. Oratory can do little to make a man repent or believe in any profound sense; but it may be most efficient in persuading him to submit to the external acts of baptism. It may thus be an invaluable weapon to the Romanist missionary, while the Protestant one will find it of little use. Indeed, in some of its aspects it seems to exert rather a physical than a rational influence, and to produce effects more nearly resembling those ascribed to Mesmerism than any others with which we are acquainted.

The strange manner in which an audience is brought into subjection to the speaker's will must have often suggested the analogy (if, indeed, it be not something even more nearly kindred) to which we have referred; the rather that a certain force of will, quite irrespective of power of thought, seems to belong to great orators. It will thus appear that the state of mind in his hearers desired by the orator is very different from that desired by the teacher; the one would rouse them to action, the other would still them to reflection.

We ought, perhaps, here to notice a very frequent modern use of oratory, where something different from immediate specific action is aimed at; that, namely, where the object is to inculcate a maxim, or to brand with a nickname. The extent to which this remark applies both to political and to so-called religious meetings we leave our thoughtful readers to consider. One who well deserves to be listened to has said, "The lower portion of the religious public in England scorns principles, delights in proper names." If it be so, we can well understand that here oratory may do much. It can deal easily with names, although hardly with principles. In the pulpit its most obvious use would seem to be found in what are called "Charity Sermons;" that is, in those comparatively rare cases where the discourse is directed to the announced end. Beyond this, it may perhaps be said with truth, there is little room for it; unless upon extraordinary occasions, when it may be thought necessary to urge to some particular act; and it must be here said that, inasmuch as (to quote from a familiar treatise) "oratory contemplates the investigation of truth only as a secondary object," the frequent practice of it is extremely perilous to the mind; which, if at all abandoned to it, may lose the power of estimating, with any justice, the relative weight of the truths which it has been accustomed to value only in so far as they could be made to serve an immediate purpose.

We are now come to a point at which it will be necessary for us to look at a very serious question. We have to consider

what is the subject-matter of which the Christian preacher has to discourse; for according to our view of that will be our estimate of the required endowments. In the threshold our readers may be reminded that, however modern usage may have assigned to such words as "preach" and "sermon" a definite or even a technical meaning, we find nothing of the same sort in the New Testament, which contains no indication of anything nearly resembling a modern sermon; and in which the terms translated by the word "preach" and its derivatives, suggest chiefly either the public announcement and proclamation of a message, or the impromptu outpourings of intense spiritual intuitions, closely related, if not identical with those of the ancient prophets; expressed most frequently, respectively, by the words *κηρύσσειν* and *προφητεύειν*; it can hardly be necessary to add that, etymologically, a "sermon" is but a speech. Upon any discussion of the subject now alluded to we have no intention of here entering; it is enough if we are not prevented in our inquiry by any biblical objections.

Christianity has been variously regarded, but chiefly in one of three aspects; as being a system of doctrine, theological or philosophical; a system of morals and a law; or, thirdly, as being characteristically neither of these, but a life; depending on a Spirit, and essentially related to a Person. The last view, which is becoming more and more felt to be the only one which will at all explain the phenomena exhibited in history, in its true sense includes the other two; inasmuch as a life, however spiritual in its nature, must have a morality, and can, at least to some extent, be explained and represented abstractly or scientifically. According to either of the two former views, but especially according to the first, the required powers of the preacher would be predominantly the scientific and logical, for he will have to treat of things considered abstractly; according to the last view they appear rather to be the poetical, for he will have to treat of things concretely, and to represent a life. If it be asked, by whom life has been most vividly portrayed in words, it must be at once answered, by poets; and if we were here at liberty to speak without reserve of the prophetic gift, we must be at once reminded that all our knowledge of it has been in union with the poetical—the same word frequently expressing both, as in the Greek language, so that Saint Paul (Tit. i. 12) writes of the poet Epimenides as "one of their own," that is, of the Cretan "prophets," (*προφήτων*); and how much poetry has the world seen before or since which does not appear feeble beside the words of David or Isaiah and the other Hebrew prophets, or of the Apocalypse of Saint John? How largely the same element is to be found in the teaching of our Lord himself

must surely have been forgotten, when his living and life-giving words were regarded and treated as exact formal definitions. We seem, in short, brought to the conclusion, that to the higher kinds of preaching the poetical element has much to contribute; and that without it (if even with it in these days) we are not to look for prophecy. If the spiritual power of so piercing the present in the very essence of its life, as to be able, in some measure, to read in it also the future, which we may believe to be implicitly contained there, in its principles at least if not in its details, may be in some sense called prophetic, possibly we are not yet out of all reach of such foreseings. Should this, however, be deemed a "devout imagination," there will still remain to the preacher who is poetically gifted, an insight into the realities of the things around him, which are hidden from other eyes by a veil of traditions and conventionalities. If he combine with a high measure of this insight a moral energy so intense that it cannot but express itself in great actions, he is likely to be one of the rare benefactors of mankind, who appear now and then to be wondered at, stoned to death, and abandoned to dishonour, until another generation shall build their sepulchres.

We have insisted upon the possession of gifts essentially poetical, as being of the highest importance to the preacher; but we must not omit to record wherein the poet, as an artist, fundamentally differs from the preacher. It will be to our readers quite a familiar and established rule of criticism, that the very nature of a proper work of art excludes any definite moral aim; while a definite and predominant moral aim would seem essential to the preacher. The artist's mind is absorbed in his own idea, and must be undisturbed by looking outwards; the preacher's is ever going out toward others to bring them into subjection to himself. One cannot, then, be at the same time the artist and the preacher, but there seems no reason why an artist should not also be a preacher, although the sermon will not be a work of art. If the author of the *Paradise Lost* could also write the *Christian Doctrine*, and unequalled political tracts, and if our general principle be true, that the poet is capable of effective social action, why should he not also be able to preach effectively? We see no reason to the contrary, unless in those rare cases where the active moral energy is so vast and constant, as not to leave to the mind the repose essential to the composition of a work of art, or perhaps even to the cultivation of the poetical faculty.

With reference to the distinction between the prophet and the poet, Mr Carlyle observes: "The *vates* prophet, we might say, has seized that sacred mystery, (the 'open secret,') rather on the moral side, as good and evil, duty and prohibition; the

vates poet on what the Germans call the æsthetic side, as beautiful, and the like. The one we may call a revealer of what we are to do, the other of what we are to love. But, indeed, these two provinces run into one another, and cannot be disjoined. The prophet too has his eye on what we are to love: how else shall we know what we are to do? The highest voice ever heard on this earth said withal, 'Consider the lilies of the field; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.' A glance, that, into the deepest deep of beauty. 'The lilies of the field,'—dressed finer than earthly princes, springing up there in the humble furrow-field; a beautiful *eye* looking out on you, from the great inner sea of beauty! How could the rude earth make these, if her essence, rugged as she looks and is, were not inwardly beauty? In this point of view, too, a saying of Goethe's which has staggered several may have a meaning, 'The beautiful,' he intimates, 'is higher than the good; the beautiful includes in it the good.' The true beautiful, which, however, I have said somewhere, 'differs from the *false*, as Heaven does from Vauxhall!' So much for the distinction and identity of poet and prophet."—*Heroes and Hero Worship*, pp. 127, 128.

In asserting the connexion between poetry and preaching, it never can have been supposed our purpose to include that gift among the necessary qualifications of one whose function admits of forms of fulfilment so indefinitely varied as does the preacher's. Assuming that, for the most part, the preacher can only be a herald, proclaiming a message of infinite grace; or a teacher, distributing to others the fruits of his own observation, study, reflection; or a witness, testifying of the elevating or renewing power of the Truth; and will in vain attempt to be a prophet, authoritatively interpreting the present, or announcing the future; still, even for the most unpoetical of men, there may be found here a sphere of labour with abundant profit. He may discourse of Christian Ethics, Dogmatical Theology, Biblical History and Criticism, or of whatever else he may happen to have more knowledge of than his hearers; or doing none of all these particularly, he may somehow or other let the spirit that is in him express itself, and confirm faith by sympathy.

It may be necessary here to say a few words on the relation of the preacher to the actor, inquiring how far histrionic art is admissible into the pulpit. We understand by the actor one who has so great an intellectual susceptibility of being impressed by the embodied thoughts of the poet, combined with unusual powers of speech and gesture, as to be able, more or less adequately, to represent in action what the poet has expressed in words. The actor is thus the exponent not of his own but of

another's mind, to which he has for the time lent his rare gifts of utterance; and, according to the highest view of the preacher's office, there is thus a distinct contrast between the two. The preacher says, "Because I believe, therefore have I spoken;" the actor says, "I have spoken because I have conceived."

At the same time, it will appear, we think, to the calm and thoughtful observer, that a great part of our actual preaching partakes largely of the histrionic character. The preacher, having for the time become saturated with the thoughts and words of some portion of Holy Writ, in which either an actual historical or an ideal character is portrayed, under the influence of such temporary possession utters his feelings with all the energy, although not always with the cultivated taste of the actor. It may perhaps be said, too, that the more the preacher is under the immediate influence of the Book, the more fully will this effect be produced; while, on the other hand, the more he has digested and incorporated into his own spiritual being its nutritious contents, the less will his discourse resemble the actor's. What has been said may suggest an explanation of a phenomenon which has sometimes perplexed us, and possibly also some of our readers; according to which we may have heard sermon after sermon, on all manner of subjects, by some preacher of much intellectual and physical vigour, each of the sermons apparently produced under a strong influence, very like that of specific belief, and yet the result of the whole has been to leave us in extreme uncertainty as to the actual personal convictions of the preacher on almost any one of the topics of his discourses. It may be thought superfluous to remark, that in so far as any preacher's power depends on this imitative art, a comparison of his sermons with his life is altogether out of the question.

To conclude these general reflections, let us attempt in a single sentence to indicate what, according to our view, will be the characteristics of a dramatic poet's sermons. We should look for the expression of an intense feeling of the awful ceaseless struggle of Good with Evil, soothed by the hope (for if quite hopeless why should he labour?) of the ultimate triumph of Good, of which we find some imperfect expression in these beautiful lines:—

- " Oh, yet we trust that somehow good  
Will be the final goal of ill,  
To pangs of nature, sins of will,  
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood.  
" That nothing walks with aimless feet;  
That not one life shall be destroy'd,  
Or cast as rubbish in the void,  
When God hath made the pile complete.

“ That not a worm is cloven in vain ;  
 That not a moth with vain desire  
 Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,  
 Or but subserves another's gain.”

The persons of whom he is called to speak we should expect to be, not cold lifeless abstractions, but all full of human passions, and represented as men of like nature, and exposed substantially to the same struggles with ourselves, placed among circumstances often widely different from ours; while the poet's imaginative insight into these circumstances will shed a strong light upon far off periods of history, into the spirit and life of which it will be given to him to see deeper than others. At the same time, it will hardly be possible for him to fall into the vulgar error, of supposing that the primeval or ancient men were in their habits, beliefs, and life, precisely what we are, or in so far as they differed from us were simply wrong; for he will be able to represent them in the fulness of their vitality only by filling in the details in perfect harmony with the slender outlines which remain to us of their history. The oldest themes will thus teem for us with fresh germinant thoughts; as, when the master's hand has cleared away the accumulated remains of unproductive decayed vegetation, and exposed to the sun the fertile earth and latent seeds, we see an unlooked-for and nourishing verdure. What has been said with reference to the sacred prophetic writings, has, in truth, a much wider application. “ Often the commentator is bringing a most prosaic mind to the consideration of the sublimest poetry. ‘ How can two walk together except they be agreed ?’ and no book can be well understood unless it be read in somewhat of the same spirit in which it was written. ‘ The Apocalypse of Saint John,’ says Milton, ‘ is the majestic image of a high and stately tragedy, shutting up and intermingling her solemn scenes and acts with a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and symphonies ;’ and though this is being over imaginative, yet Milton is much nearer in spirit to the Divine original than many that have presumed to handle the subject, altogether devoid of the sacred glow which would have conducted them along the footprints of the Apostle John. Instead of perceiving that the prophecies were written in the free and flowing outlines of poetry, they have gone on spelling figure after figure, as if they were slowly deciphering the hieroglyphics of some Egyptian temple.”\*

The sympathy here referred to as necessary we may expect in a poet; and the importance of it is probably far greater than is

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\* The Structure of Prophecy, by James Douglas of Cavers. 1850.

usually supposed. What lengths of utter materialism it is possible for commentators to reach, by the rejection of all that is spiritual and supersensuous as contranatural and incredible, may be seen in such writers as Paulus; while, on the other hand, the poet, whose dwelling has ever been figured to be on some Parnassus, or other heavenly mount, seems most at home when standing on the finite and visible he is reaching out into the invisible and the infinite.

The little volume of sermons which has given occasion to these observations, is, in several respects, one of the most remarkable we have met with for a long time. It will be found to possess the merits which by anticipation, in virtue of its parentage, we have ascribed to it, with other merits of a high order. Discarding utterly the tasteless conventional pulpit phraseology, which with us is only not universal, and has the unhappy effect of either obscuring thought or concealing the want of it; with a deep sense of the reality and awful import of the things about which he has to speak, and not forgetting that if he would speak with effect he must use terms within the comprehension of the humble and not over-intelligent Hampshire rustics, forming the bulk of his audience, Mr. Kingsley has been able to express Christian thoughts, which the highest will not find unworthy of notice, in the simplest, homeliest language; which is so predominantly Saxon, that in whole pages one could hardly find a few dozen words of Latin origin.

The titles of some of these sermons are suggestive. Such headings as "God's World," "Religion not Godliness," "Hell on Earth," "Association," "On Books," shew that the writer aims at something more than playing round a text. He grapples indeed very boldly with subjects, and with subjects of immediate practical interest, extorting a blessing often from the most unpromising; fighting not against "extinct Satans," but against the actual existing Satans, the terrible enough evils which are now at work all around us. Not content with the mere amplification of the words of Scripture, applicable immediately to a different social state, and to forms of evil different from the present, the author's endeavour is rather to dive into the heart of the Scripture text, and become possessed of its very life and spirit, which is for all time and for all circumstances. One of his great objects is to undo that huge work of an unbelieving age, through which the Idea of Nature has been disjoined from the Idea of God, for whom, in this relation, has been substituted some dim notion of a changeless self-subsisting law, so that the earth we tread on is hardly recognised as in very truth God's world. But we shall not here enter upon any examination of the theology which is taught (implicitly, for all technical theological terms, and the inculcation of

any theological system are studiously avoided) in this work, having introduced it to our readers for a different purpose; and now leaving them to judge of its spirit from the extracts which follow, we recommend the little volume to them in some of their thoughtful hours, as a remarkable phenomenon in the department of literature to which it belongs.

“RELIGION NOT GODLINESS.

“Did you ever remark, my friends, that the Bible says hardly anything about religion—that it never praises religious people. This is very curious. Would to God we would all remember it! The Bible speaks of a religious man only once, and of religion only twice, except where it speaks of the Jews’ religion to condemn it, and shews what an empty, blind, useless thing it was. What does the Bible talk of, then? It talks of God—not of religion, but of God. It tells us not to be religious but to be godly. . . . And yet I believe we ought to think of it, and, by God’s help, I will one day preach you a sermon, asking you all round this fair question:—If Jesus Christ came to you in the shape of a poor man, whom nobody knew, should you know him—should you admire him, fall at his feet and give yourself up to him, body and soul? I am afraid that I for one should not. I am afraid that too many of us here would not. That comes of us thinking more of religion than we do of godliness—in plain words, more of our own souls than we do of Jesus Christ. But you will want to know what is, after all, the difference between religion and godliness? Just the difference, my friends, that there is between always thinking of self and always forgetting self—between the terror of a slave and the affection of a child—between the fear of hell and the love of God. For, tell me, what you mean by being religious? Do you not mean, thinking a great deal about your own souls, and praying and reading about your own souls, and trying by all possible means to get your own souls saved? Is not that the meaning of religion? and yet I have never mentioned God’s name in describing it! This sort of religion must have very little to do with God. . . . Yes, indeed, what would heaven be worth without God? But how many people feel that the curse of this day is that most people have forgotten *that*? They are selfishly anxious enough about their own souls, but they have forgotten God. They are religious for fear of hell, but they are not godly, for they do not love God, or see God’s hand in everything. They forget that they have a Father in heaven; that He sends rain and sunshine, and fruitful seasons; that He gives them all things richly to enjoy in spite of all their sins. His mercies are far above, out of their sight, and therefore His judgments are far away out of their sight too, and so they talk of the ‘Visitation of God,’ as if it was something very extraordinary, and happened very seldom, and when it came only brought evil, and harm, and sorrow. If a man lives on in health, they say he lives by the strength of his own constitution; if he drops down dead, they say he died by ‘the visitation of God.’ If the cor-

crops go on all right and safe, they think *that* quite natural—the effect of the soil, and the weather, and their own skill in farming and gardening. But if there comes a hailstorm or a blight, and spoils it all, and brings on a famine, they call it at once 'a visitation of God.' My friends, do you think God 'visits' the earth or you only to harm you? I tell you, that every blade of grass grows by the 'visitation of God.' I tell you, that every healthy breath you ever drew, every cheerful hour you ever spent, every good crop you ever housed safely, came to you by 'the visitation of God.' I tell you, that every sensible thought or plan that ever came into your heads—every loving, honest, manly, womanly feeling that ever rose in your hearts, God 'visited' you to put it there. If God's Spirit had not given it you, you would never have got it of yourselves."—Pp. 13-18.

"LIFE AND DEATH.

"The text tells us that he gives life, not only to us who have immortal souls, but to everything on the face of the earth; for the psalm has been talking all through not only of men but of beasts, fishes, trees, and rivers, and rocks, sun and moon. Now all these things have a life in them. Not a life like ours; but still you speak rightly and wisely when you say, 'That tree is alive, and that tree is dead. That running water is live water—it is sweet and fresh; but if it is kept standing it begins to putrefy, its life is gone from it, and a sort of death comes over it, and makes it foul and unwholesome, and unfit to drink.' This is a deep matter, this, how there is a sort of life in everything, even to the stones under our feet. I do not mean, of course, that stones can think as our life makes us do, or feel as the beasts' life makes them do, or even grow as the trees' life makes them do; but I mean that their life keeps them as they are, without changing or decaying. You hear miners and quarrymen talk very truly of the live rock. That stone, they say, was cut out of the live rock, meaning the rock as it is under ground, sound and hard—as it would be, for aught we know, to the end of time, unless it was taken out of the ground, out of the place where God's Spirit meant it to be, and brought up to the open air and the rain, in which it is not its nature to be; and then you will see that the life of the stone begins to pass from it bit by bit, that it crumbles and peels away, and in short decays, and is turned again to its dust. Its organization, as it is called, or life ends, and then—what? does the stone lie for ever useless? No! And there is the great blessed mystery of how God's Spirit is always bringing life out of death. When the stone is decayed and crumbled down to dust and clay, it makes *soil*. This very soil here, which you plough, is the decayed ruins of ancient hills; the clay which you dig up in the fields was once part of some slate or granite mountains, which were worn away by weather and water, that they might become fruitful earth. Wonderful! but any one who has studied these things can tell you they are true. Any one who has ever lived in mountainous countries ought to have seen the thing happen—ought to know that

the land in the mountain valleys is made at first, and kept rich year by year by the washings from the hills above; and this is the reason why land left dry by rivers and by the sea is generally so rich. Then what becomes of the soil? It begins a new life. The roots of the plants take it up; the salts which they find in it—the staple, as we call them—go to make leaves and seed; the very sand has its use—it feeds the stalks of corn and grass, and makes them stiff. The corn stalks would never stand upright if they could not get sand from the soil. So what a thousand years ago made part of a mountain, now makes part of a wheat plant; and in a year more the wheat grain will have been eaten, and the wheat straw perhaps eaten too, and they will have *died*—decayed in the bodies of the animals who have eaten them, and then they will begin a third new life—they will be turned into parts of the animal's body—of a man's body. So what is now your bone and flesh may have been once a rock on some hill-side a hundred miles away."

The "Sermon" mentioned last at the head of this paper, which has reached us as we are going to press, and which has already gained some notoriety from the circumstances attending its delivery, relates to questions too delicate and difficult to be even referred to in the close of an Article. To enter upon any consideration of its doctrine or objects is obviously foreign to our present purpose; and having chronicled the fact of its publication, we must now take leave of Mr. Kingsley.





CHARACTER AND OPINIONS

WILLIAM LANGLAND.

AS SHOWN BY

A Vision of William Concerning Piers the Plowman.

THESIS

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE DIVINITY  
NEW JERSEY COLLEGE, COLLEGE OF  
THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

EDWIN M. HOPKINS, A. M.

Presented to the Faculty of the University of Kansas

IN 1913

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OF

WILLIAM LANGLAND,

AS SHOWN IN

**The** Vision of William Concerning Piers the Plowman."

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THESIS

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE COLLEGE OF  
NEW JERSEY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

---

BY

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UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS.

REPRINTED FROM THE KANSAS UNIVERSITY QUARTERLY  
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Prof. A. P. Marsh.

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## Introduction.

The special purpose of this investigation is to give an exposition of the character and teaching of him whose work preëminently, as compared with that of other writers of the fourteenth century, reflects the opinions of the common people. Chaucer, Gower, and Wyclif represent each a distinct phase of life as well as of thought; but all are on a plane removed from that of Langland. He too was a scholar, but a humble one, and he remained ever in close sympathy with the humble; his ideas were either the ideas he received from them, or those which they were eager to receive from him, as is attested by the popularity of his work when written. For this reason the results herein arrived at may be supposed to index in some sort the mental life of English people of the lower ranks.

The references to texts A, B, and C, respectively, are in every case to the parallel edition of the three texts as published by the Clarendon Press, 1886, in the first of the two volumes of that edition. Volume II. of the same edition is referred to as the "Notes." *R* refers to the poem "Richard the Redeless" as included in Volume I. of the same edition. The other references are given in full, or are self explanatory.

## Character and Opinions of William Langland.

*Author of "Piers the Plowman."*

### The Scene of the Poem.

**Relation to  
the central  
subject of in-  
quiry.**

Before taking up the central subject of investigation, I wish to consider the scene of the poem and its relation to Langland's life; because, in this case, such an investigation promises to throw some light upon the unsettled question as to whether Langland ever received a university training, and thus partly to account for the nature of his thinking and teaching.

So far as the known facts of his life are concerned, they may be summarized in a few words. These facts are that Langland was born of respectable parentage at Cleobury Mortimer in Shropshire at about 1332; that his father, Stacy de Rokayle, afterward removed to the parish of Shipton-under-Wychwood in Oxfordshire; that the child was baptized in infancy, sent early to school, and loved it so that he determined to be a student all his life, and a scholar according to the opportunities. Here rises the question suggested, as to the nature of those opportunities, and whether access to one of the universities was among them. Professor Ten Brink believes it "most probable" that Langland received a university training, perhaps at Oxford.\* If this were true, the poem should exhibit, in addition to a technical knowledge of certain subjects, a reflection of university life in allusions and scenes described.

But whatever may be the conclusion, after our investigation is completed, as to the nature and extent of Langland's training, it is certain that he became a student, and eventually a humble member of the secular clergy; that he married, and spent his life in performing the duties of his profession, studying the Vulgate and the world about him, drawing conclusions from the one, and applying them to the other.

This seems a simple enough matter, but Langland's conclusions and his manner of enforcing them were not as those of other men. The

\*Ten Brink, *Early Eng. Lit.*, p. 252.

church of the fourteenth century was a huge machine. Not in organization and government only, but in its methods of preaching and interpreting the Scriptures all was formal and mechanical; the preacher spoke according to rule, often anxious only for the completion of his task, and careless whether the seed thus idly sown should spring up or wither away. Careless whether his flock did or did not follow his teaching, the churchman became careless in regard to following it himself. To formalism succeeded hypocrisy, and open neglect even of formal duties; the church preyed upon the people, and became in turn a refuge for those who sought to escape hardship and make a living easily.

**Why the poem was written.**

Langland entered the church because he preferred the contemplative to the active life. His studies revealed to him not so much new teachings as the fact that the old ones had not been properly applied and enforced. He dared to speak, but the number of those whom he might address personally was very small; and had Langland been simply the faithful priest, we should know as little of him as of a thousand others who have kept the church spiritually alive, when it was most corrupt. But his longing to set forth the truth was not to be satisfied by the performance of daily duty alone; in his otherwise unoccupied hours, his recreation was to write what was in his thoughts, at first, doubtless, without thinking that this work of his leisure was to possess value or importance, but afterward in the full realization of all that it might accomplish. Thus we may interpret his statement that the work is the solace of his lighter hours, through which he strengthens himself for his more serious duties, though he would willingly forsake it if he knew how better to employ the time (B, XII., 20 ff.) But we may detect a growing feeling that the work is worthy, that it is in harmony with his own teaching as to the nature of Dobest; and the omission of even an implied excuse from the final revision of the poem may show his conviction that through it he had accomplished his true lifework.

**Relation to author's life.**

The three several versions of the poem belong, it is well established, to the years 1362-63, 1377, and about 1393. It would seem that we should be able to learn the complete story of the author's life from versions so widely separated in time, and so full of detail and incident; but instead, we are scarcely able to tell anything in addition to what has been stated, except that he lived in London for the greater part of the time. Local allusions are remarkably few, considering the length of the poem; a fact due to the allegorical structure of the composition; and of these local allusions, fewer still, except those which pertain to the

city of London, are of such a character as to indicate that the author had personally visited the places mentioned.

**Date of coming to London.** An interesting question may be asked, the discussion of which must be largely speculative, as to the scene and occupation of Langland's life before he became a resident of London. That he had become somewhat familiar with London before the earliest version of his poem (Text A) was written, is scarcely open to doubt, though were it not for the exceedingly circumstantial and graphic character of a single portion (A, V., 146 ff.), describing a London tavern, it would seem that his familiarity with the city was not so great as to indicate long residence. To me, Text A seems to breathe a spirit of the country; with the exception mentioned, its London allusions are general in character, and might be based upon common report, while many of the characters described were to be met with very often in the country as well as in the city. Perhaps the safest conclusion is that Langland had but recently come to London, and that he was still dominated by the influence of the earlier country life.

In the C-text is found the positive statement, "I haue lyved in London meny longe 3eres" (C, XVII., 286). It happens that the corresponding passage in the B-text (B, XV., 148), states, "I haue lyved in londe, quod I, my name is Longe Wille;" and while this may be and usually is interpreted as an introduction of the author's own name into the text,—an interpretation justified by precedent, and by other examples in the text itself of playing upon words,—it may also be interpreted as referring to a life in the country, and so meaning that Langland had not yet lived in London so very many years. Still there is no further evidence to show whether he had lived there more or less than fifteen years, (interval from A-text to B-text), and thus to fix the date of his arrival as earlier or later than the A-text, except such evidence as may be gathered from the general atmosphere of the A-text. I conclude that he came to London at about the time that the A-text was written, certainly not much earlier; and that he married at about the same time, as his daughter had arrived at years of understanding when the B-text was written. (B, XVIII., 426).

The standpoint of the A-text is certainly in the country. The author places himself there three times in as many visions, (A, prologue, 10; A, V., 6; A, IX., 58), and the action of the poem is also in the country, with the exception of certain episodes. The "field full of folk," and the marriage of Meed, are in the country; the trial of Meed transports us to Westminster, but we return again to the field of folk, the preaching of Reason, and the appearance of Piers Plowman, who

ould not well be other than a countryman. The penitents are from  
h city and country.

The chief distinction between the A-text and the C-text in respect  
scene is, that in the latter London dominates. Further, in the  
text, the author awakes in London after going to sleep on Malvern  
Hills (C, VI., 1), goes to sleep again in a London church (C, VI., 108),  
and wakes again in time to see the sun set in the south from Malvern  
Hills (C, X., 294). This inconsistency, due to the interpolation of  
w matter, would seem to furnish some evidence touching the place  
composition of each version; but the value of the evidence is  
destroyed by the fact that the B-text, which was evidently written after  
the London residence had begun, is here in accord with the A-text,  
instead of the C-text, as it should be if the change noted were due to  
change of residence.

Though the A-text has more to do with the country than with the  
city, the argument that it might have been written before Langland  
had become thoroughly familiar with London has to offset it the fact  
that the allusions to places in London are more specific than those  
to places in the country, and more numerous as well. Malvern Hills  
may be definitely located; and the field full of folk may be near them;  
so too may be the half acre of Piers Plowman; but supposition is not  
certainty. On the other hand, Westminster is a definite locality, and  
so are the various places whose representatives meet Glutton at the  
tavern, though the tavern itself is not named.

Though we may not therefore fix definitely the time when Langland  
came to London, it seems evident that in 1362 he was acquainted  
with both city and country; that he loved the country rather than the  
city, an allegiance still cherished fifteen years after; and that he had  
not long forsaken the Malvern Hills for the London streets.

**Occupation of earlier years.** If Langland spent much of the earlier part of his life  
in the country, as seems reasonable, it becomes of  
interest to ask how it was spent. He shows entire  
familiarity with the plowman's life, his duties, and even his food at the  
several seasons of the year. No others of his descriptive passages are  
so minute and so evidently accurate as those relating to rustic life and  
labor. There is, I believe, more than a possibility that the boy Will,  
before his assumption of clerical dignity, had formed a practical  
acquaintance with the duties of the farm and the harvest field, and  
had found them not at all to his taste. The question addressed to  
him by Reason (C, VI., 12), "'Canstow serve[n],' he seide, 'or syngen  
a churche?'" might indicate that, at the time Langland had in mind,  
he had not yet become in any sense a priest; though before the end  
the passage is reached, he is speaking of his long clothes, and

declares that he lives in London. But he has so often shown a facility in making sudden transitions of thought, that we may still be permitted to think that the reference in the beginning of the passage is to an early time spent in a sort of vagabondage. He also accuses himself elsewhere, and in a very sweeping way, of having devoted altogether too much time to the world, the flesh, and the devil. But on the other hand, the passage quoted may mean only what is distinctly implied in another (C, VI., 91), that Langland was at no time formally attached to a priory or minster; and his self-accusation may be a natural expression from one who despises the things of the world. If this be the case, he probably obtained his knowledge of country life upon the farm held by his father, and by later inspection while journeying about in his long robe, as too many clerics were wont to do. The most that can be said is that there is a possibility that some of the days of his youth were wild and idle, and a probability that others of them were spent in acquiring a practical knowledge of seeds and seasons (C, XIII., 177-192), and of farming operations in general (C, XXII).

**Inferences  
from allusions  
to places.**

We may attain to something more of certainty in regard to the scene of Langland's life and labors taken as a whole. The total number of allusions to places in England outside of London, as tabulated in Professor Skeat's index, is but sixteen; a surprisingly small number. These indicate a general acquaintance with the country lying between Shropshire and London, a territory that is very nearly the geographical center of England; and the places mentioned seldom lie far away from a line drawn from Langland's birthplace to London. Extended to the northwest, such a line would pass near Chester, and to the southeast, not far from Canterbury. A few names carry us from London northeastward into Norfolk; but these are of a general or proverbial character, not usually indicating actual acquaintance. It is otherwise with allusions to places between Shropshire and London. There are also some rather specific references to places in Hampshire, southwest of London; while if we take account of the poem of "Richard the Redeless," Langland in 1399 had passed westward as far as Bristol. Apparently the greater part of his life was spent near London; the earlier part of it in a gradual moving down from the Malvern Hills to London; and perhaps its latest years in a journey westward. Without doubt the entire action of the poem we are to study, so far as that action lies in England, lies between and about London and the Malvern Hills; while of other parts of his country, Langland knew little, save by hearsay.

## The Content of the Poem.

While materials for the history of Langland's outer life are very scanty, as may appear from the preceding discussion, the mass of those bearing upon his inner or mental life is proportionately great, and to give a complete exposition of them would require a volume. The results which follow have been obtained, after tabulation, by endeavoring to compress into a few words the substance of many citations, and to substantiate each point by a single appropriate reference.

### I. SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION.

Langland's attitude toward real and pretended science is less satirical than that of Chaucer, perhaps because Langland had given the subject less attention; still in speaking of the arts which pertain to magic, he does express considerable distrust. To the "seven arts" which comprised the circle of scientific knowledge of his time, he twice refers (C, XII., 98; C, XIII., 93); but the character of his work would not indicate that he had been a very diligent student of any of these arts, except perhaps grammar. The seven arts mentioned are the trivium,—grammar, logic, and rhetoric, and the quadrivium,—music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy.

It is evident that this circle of arts does not include all human knowledge, nor is it broad enough to cover all the learned allusions made by Langland himself. To make the classification more complete, it will perhaps be best to refer to the source from which popular knowledge upon matters of science and philosophy was largely derived, the "Secretum Secretorum" (Morley, English Writers, IV., 237); a book which Langland appears not to have known. This work is summarized by Gower in the seventh part of the "Confessio Amantis," and his summary may answer our purpose. Knowledge is arranged in three classes, — Theoretic, Rhetoric, and Practic. Theoretic includes theology, physics, and mathematics; mathematics in its turn comprising arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy, or the quadrivium. Rhetoric includes grammar and logic, and Practic includes ethics, economics, and politics.

Gower discusses the constitution of created things as if the subject belonged to mathematics rather than to physics. It is necessary also to find a place for alchemy and medicine in the scheme of knowledge before we can give a logical place to Langland's remarks upon those subjects. Perhaps the shortest road is this, that astronomy includes astrology; from astronomy, astrology, and geometry, comes alchemy; and medicine is the application of astronomy, astrology, geometry,

and alchemy, to unfortunate human beings. Or medicine belongs to the geometrical and astronomical department of mathematics, where Gower discusses it; a conclusion according with that based upon Chaucer's description of the physician (Canterbury Tales, prologue, 411 ff.).\*

**The Elements.** It appears that Langland had no clear idea of any system of knowledge. At least he utterly refused to be bound down by any received system upon any subject, whether because his knowledge of received systems was inexact, or because he cared more for the exactness of his metre and alliteration than for all the systems under the sun. For example, according to Gower and the "*Secretum Secretorum*," the four elements of things created are earth, air, water, and fire, with a fifth element, *orbis*—the shell which surrounds all the others. Langland in one place gives them as earth, air, wind, and water (C, XI., 129), where he may be using *air* for *ether*, or the heavenly fire (Skeat, Notes, p. 138), and is simply confused by different authorities. In another passage he deliberately drops out *earth*, and for a special purpose substitutes *wit*, making the list wit, water, wind, and fire (C, X., 56).

**Alchemy and  
general sci-  
ences.**

To correspond to Gower's grave discussion of alchemy, and Chaucer's satirical one (Canon's Yeoman's Tale), Langland has a brief and general passage whose subject is the sciences in general, and alchemy among the rest (B, X., 168 ff.). Dame Study in naming her accomplishments, states that she has taught logic and many other laws, trained Plato and Aristotle, educated children in grammar, and contrived tools for all kinds of crafts. Having thus placed the handicrafts on the roll of sciences, the dame turns her attention to more abstract subjects, and finds of them only Theology really worthy. Yet Theology has puzzled her ten score times; the more she mused thereon, the mistier it seemed, and the deeper she divined, the darker it became. In fact, she concludes, it is no science at all, but a soothfast belief, a matter of faith. Love is its cardinal doctrine, and there is no science under the sun so sovereign for the soul. Then, in comparison with Theology, the other sciences are briefly and finally disposed of as follows:—

But astronomy is an hard thing, and evil for to know,  
Geometry and geomancy are guileful of speech;  
Whoso thinketh to work with those two thriveth full late,  
For sorcery is the sovereign book that to the science belongeth.  
Yet there are contrivances in caskets of many men's making  
Experiments of alchemy the people to deceive—

\*See also Saunders' Chaucer's Cant. Tales, pp. 111-125.

or as text A here reads (A, XI., 157),

Experiments of alchemy of Albert's making;  
Necromancy and pyromancy the devil to rise maketh.

Text B continues—

If thou think to Do Well, deal therewith never;  
All these sciences I myself subtled and ordained,  
And founded them first, folk to deceive.

This condemnation of astrology and astronomy is not adhered to consistently throughout the poem. **Astronomy and astrology.** Langland makes use himself of a warning from Saturn, though perhaps satirically (C, IX., 349); he expresses belief in the favorable influence of a constellation (C, XV., 30), and says that Gráce teaches astronomers and philosophers to see and say what shall befall (C, XXII., 242); and conversely, the failure of predictions is ascribed to the evil deeds of the people, and their lack of faith (C, XVIII., 96 ff.).

The greater number of allusions pertain to popular beliefs with reference to medicine, and to natural history; the latter doubtless derived from the Bestiaries, Latin and English, except some of the most ordinary facts of observation. There is a somewhat extended discussion of the habits of beasts and birds (B, XI., 326; C, XIV., 143 ff.), based partly on observation and partly on Aristotle at second-hand. Langland mentions the growing of precious stones (A, XI., 12), the cricket's living in the fire, and the curlew on air (C, XVI., 243); and in Richard the Redeless (Passus III), he tells how the hart, by swallowing an adder, renews its youth, and how young partridges forsake their foster mother for the true one.

One of the prominent medical allusions is the mention of triacle (treacle) or salve, the remedy for poisons made from the flesh of vipers (Skeat, Notes, 227) **Medicine.** suggesting the principle, Like cures like, which is formulated elsewhere (C, XXI., 158). Precious stones cure diseases and poisons (B, II., 14).\* Walnuts, if the shell and bitter bark be removed, will increase the strength and benefit the general health of old men (C, XIII., 144). The virtues of plasters were understood (C, XXIII., 314, 359), sleeping draughts were employed (C, XXIII., 379), and many drugs were in use (C, XXIII., 174). A full list of common diseases is given (C, XXIII., 81) comprising fevers and fluxes, coughs and consumptions, heart spasms, cramps and toothaches, colds and catarrhs, running sores, boils and swellings, agues, "frenzies and foul evils." Leprosy was not unknown (C, X., 179). More terrible than

\*C, IX., 189. "And lame men he leeched with lungs of beasts," probably means that the lungs were given for food.

all was the plague, against which neither "dias" nor drugs nor physicians might avail.

Hunger is a better doctor than any physician (C, Hygiene. IX., 268 ff.), and often Langland gives evidence of faith in diet and hygiene that is refreshing, and not less so that it is based not upon learned treatises, but upon literal interpretation of the Scriptures, and upon common sense. He believes in labor and temperance for the physical health no less than for the spiritual; and if one labor and be temperate in all things, then, says Langland (C, IX., 293),—

"—ich dar legge myn eres  
That Fysyk shal hus forrede hodes for hus fode sulle,  
And hus cloke of Calabre for hus communes legge,  
And be fayn, by my faith, his fysyk to lete,  
And lerne to labore with londe leste lyfode hym falle,"

And finally passing from satire to serious earnest,—

"Ther aren meny luthere leches and leele leches fewe,  
Thei don men deye thorgh here drynkes er destyne hit woldr."

Langland doubts as does Chaucer, the efficiency of even the best of physicians, and regards them always with a lurking smile. There may be no hint of irreverence in the allusion to "Nedde the fisicien" (A, VII., 170), though the designation looks suspiciously like a modern nickname; or in the account of the conflict of age with a physician (C, XXIII., 176)—

Eld aventured him on Life, and at last he hit  
A physician with a furred hood that he fell in a palsy,  
And there died that doctor ere three days after;—

but the meaning certainly seems to be that the members of the learned fraternity were ornamental rather than useful. Elsewhere (C, XXIII., 171) we learn that the doctors take gold, good won, and give in return the imaginary protection of a glass hood. Langland has expressed himself more briefly than Chaucer upon this subject (C. T., Prol., 411-444), but not less to the point.

**Grammar.** Langland's familiarity with the subject of grammar is indicated (C, IV., 335 ff.). He compares Bribery and Reward to the direct and indirect relations in grammar. The substance of this distinction is that reward is what one receives after duty done, that is after conformity to rule, divine or human, the former especially; just as an adjective or substantive accords with its antecedent in gender, number, and case. The bribe is what is received through self-interest entirely, and lack of conformity to rule, such as is seen in the indirect grammatical relation, in which there is lack of agreement in number and case. The meaning of the term, "indirect relation" is not clear; nor was it clear to the king, who states that

“Englisch was it neuere,” (C, IV., 343). The passage is chiefly of interest as showing that Langland was in his later years paying especial attention to the subject, perhaps in connection with the revision of his poem. The passage ends with a comparison of mankind to a substantive, and of Deity to an adjective of “three true terminations.”

Langland's interest in grammar is also shown in the B-text (B, XV., 365); he there terms it the “ground of all” and complains that it no longer receives proper attention, unless from children:—no new clerks can versify fair, or formally endite, and not one among a hundred can construe an author in any language but Latin or English. In the corresponding passage in the C-text he omits the implied praise of French, and states only that none can now construe naturally what poets made. In both passages one detects that Langland was very proud of his own knowledge of the theory and practice of this science.

## 2. POLITICAL AND SOCIAL THEORIES.

As Langland's whole structure rests upon a moral basis, a difficulty arises in making a clear distinction between what is ethical and what is economic. The expressions of his political opinion have reference chiefly to the duties which the several classes of society owe each other in accordance with Scriptural law.\*

**Classes of Society.** Langland's classification of society is fivefold, comprising king, knights, clergy, commons, and plowmen (B. Prol. 112–120). Their general relation to each other is specified as follows (Ibid):—

Then came there a king, knighthood him led,  
Might of the commons made him to reign;  
And then came kind wit, and clerks he made  
For to counsel the king, and the commons save.

The king, and knighthood, and clergy as well, determined that the commons should provide for themselves, and presumably for the rest; and the commons therefore contrived crafts, and for profit of all ordained plowmen to till and labor. The king and the commons and kind wit the third shaped law and loyalty, that each might know his own.

Text C (I, 139) varies this passage in a manner that is very suggestive. The king reigns not specifically by might of the commons, but “by much might of the men,” which may be interpreted to mean knights instead of commons. Instead of the king, it is conscience and kind wit that with knighthood decide as to the first duty of the commons. Lastly, instead of establishing a separate class of plowmen, the commons simply make a plow, which presumably any of

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\*Compare with the discussion of moral duties.

them might use. I interpret this to mean that in consequence of the jealousy existing between the king, Richard II., and the commons, and of the uprising of the lower classes under Wat Tyler, Langland, without changing his opinions, so modified this expression of them as to remove any cause of friction there may have been in his original blunt statement.

The sub-classification of the clergy and commons in respect to rank, profession, or trade, is reasonably complete and minute. The most considerable list is given in the description of the field full of folk, (A, Prol.). A general resume is as follows. The religious occupations, professions, or orders, comprise anchorites and hermits, pilgrims and palmers, the four orders of mendicant friars, pardoners, parish-priests, bachelors, bishops, cardinals, and the pope. The commons is resolved into the legal profession with its various grades and officers,—magistrates, sergeants, “sysours and somners, shereyves and here clerks,” beadles, bailiffs, advocates (cf. C, III., 59); merchants, petty tradesmen of all sorts, and handicraftsmen, as bakers, butchers, and brewsters many, woollen websters and weavers of linen, tailors, tanners, and tuckers also, masons, miners and delvers, cooks and taverners (A, Prol., 98–109). Then may be added those who live upon others; minstrels, beggars, jesters (A, Prol., 32–40; cf. corresponding passages in B and C).

**King.** The passage quoted (page 243) names as the fundamental divisions of society, or the three estates, the nobility, the clergy, and the commons. The source of the royal power is laid down in language unmistakable. Then follow specific maxims for kingly guidance, besides the general teaching that may be gathered from the fable of the cat and the rats (B, Prol., 145), and from the poem of Richard the Redeless.

Deriving his power from the commons, he owes to them, in return for service and obedience, “law, love, and lealty,” absolute impartiality (C, IV., 381), faithful observance of law (B, Prol., 140), and protection from all enemies. That is, he is recognized as a judge who must be both just and merciful (C, I., 152), an executive, a commander, and in some sense a lawmaker; though as to the latter point, it would appear that he may legislate for the commons by their courtesy rather than by right (B, Prol., 143). As executive, he may claim the help of the commons in enforcing the law, and may not easily succeed without it (C, V., 176). He may also claim of the commons financial support, but should rather ask than demand (C, XXII. 467 ff.). He is subject to the laws as well as charged with their execution, is responsible to the power that created him (the commons) in that he may forfeit their love and respect, though Langland hesi-

tates to include the right to rule under things forfeitable; and finally he must be guided in all things by the law of God.

Langland's disinclination to advance revolutionay teaching is clearly shown in the fable of the cat and the rats. The rats (burgesses or upper classes) and the mice (lesser commons) have suffered most seriously from the interference of the cat (the king) with their rights of property and personal liberty. But the redress proposed is simply to secure a means of knowing in advance what the movements of the cat will be, ignoring the fact that it would be quite as easy to imprison the cat, or destroy him utterly, as to hang a bell on his neck. Finally a mouse reasons philosophically, in view of the difficulty of carrying out the proposed plan, that submission is best. A king may be bad, is the teaching, but if there were no king, or if his power were more restrained, his subjects might prey upon each other. Even a bad king will maintain peace at home, and will sometimes cease his domestic depredations to prey upon foreigners.

While there is here implied a remonstrance against the impositions of the king (Richard II), Langland's complaint is probably not so much against the enactments themselves as against those who carry them into effect. This is directly stated in *Richard the Redeless*. Courtiers, retainers, purveyors are all robbers, and the king's chief fault is failure to protect his people against his own creatures.

**Knights.** Langland pays the order of knighthood the high compliment of making Christ a member of it, who jousted at Jerusalem in defense of humanity. It shares with royalty the duty of defending and protecting the commons against foes, trespassers, and even animals and birds of prey (C, IX., 19-34). Courtesy and physical prowess characterize the knights, rather than intellectual ability; and their first duty is to maintain truth. "Truly to take and truly to fight is the profession and the pure order that appendeth to knights, and whoso passeth that point is apostate of knighthood" (C, II., 96 ff.). Knighthood was established in heaven, and the punishment of Lucifer may serve as a warning to the knight who forsakes his high trust. Only those may receive it rightly who have land and lineage, and are otherwise worthy (C, XIV., 111). Langland is at one with Chaucer in the respect accorded to the order; but this respect does not prevent him from revealing the fact that there are knights base and unworthy, who have purchased their spurs by means of money or influence, and not through any knightly merit (C, VI., 72-79).

**Commons.** The general status of the commons has already been defined, in discussing that of the king. Between commons and king stand the magistrates, ministers of the king to interpret the law and enforce its penalty, yet chosen from the commons (A, III.,

67). To their position they should rise through an educational qualification, we may infer; since Langland apparently believes that this is precedent to any exercise of power, even rightful power. It is the duty of the uneducated rank and file, those who do not understand Latin, to serve and suffer, to accept the words of the king as their law, and to put all their trust in him. Through Latin lies the road of aspirants to participation in government, first in an advisory capacity, and then perhaps in a judicial one; though a judicial position is secured through the will of others rather than one's own inclination. Those who are, through education, competent to act, will see the folly of hasty and inconsiderate action.

The chief good of the commons is, then, to be secured by their resigning the governing power into the hands of natural or chosen rulers, and by fulfilling the precepts of the moral law. The seat of the advisory and judicial power is indicated with reasonable clearness, but it is not so clearly indicated what Langland believes to be the seat of legislative power. He does not say outright that it belongs either to king or commons, but he seems to imply that the power resides in the First Estate (king and nobles) by sufferance of the commons; and this accords with the statement made by Freeman (art. England, Enc. Brit., VIII.), that at this time the form of legislative procedure was for the commons to petition, and the king and lords to enact at their request. Another reason for Langland's silence upon this point is doubtless that in his opinion the law of Holy Writ is sufficient. We detect the spirit of Magna Charta in his work, but we are unmistakably shown that to him the Great Charter is the law of God.

**Plowmen.** The precise meaning of the term *plowman* in the poem is open to discussion. Is Piers Plowman himself a free tenant, or a villein, the legal restrictions upon whom are thus stated (C. XIII., 61): No churl may make a charter or sell his cattle without the consent of his lord; if he run in debt, or leave his place of abode, he is liable to imprisonment. Langland says that no clerk should be tonsured unless he were come of franklins and free men, and wedded folk (C, VI., 63); but he nowhere makes Piers Plowman a tonsured clerk. Piers proposes, as a free man might, to leave his half acre, and guide the pilgrims to Truth (C, IX); but his absence is apparently not to be permanent. Freeman defines a churl (see reference above) as a member of the lowest class of freemen. This class after the Conquest became fused with that of the slaves into the intermediate class of villeins, who were not slaves in person, but not wholly free in law. It may be that with Langland, the plowman and the churl are the same, but that in describing the one, he is thinking of his

constantly increasing privileges, and in defining the other, of his exact legal status. Or he may have in mind the distinction pointed out by Skeat (Notes, 169) between the two principal classes of villeins, the first of whom "were allowed many indulgences, and even in some cases, a limited kind of property;" and all of whom, Freeman states, became entirely free by the end of the fifteenth century.

It is evident that by plowmen Langland means laborers attached to the land, because (C, IX., 331) after having described the food and implements of the plowman, he makes a comparison, in the main unfavorable, between him and the "laboreres that han no londe to lyuen on bote here handes;" and it was probably this movable contingent that was in such demand after the pestilence, and concerning whom a law was passed limiting wages, and prohibiting traveling from one parish to another. That Piers has some property rights is shown by his making his will, and in its specifications (C, IX., 95); but still he owes allegiance to his lord Truth, holds under him, and receives from him instructions as well as deputed power.

My conclusion then is that Piers Plowman, as he at first appears, is a villein of the highest class. So far as he has a political significance, it is as a member of the commons; but in the nature of things he can have little until his emancipation is complete.\*

**Clergy.** The office of the clergy is purely spiritual, and though they, especially the higher prelates, do meddle with political matters, they have no business to do so, except in an advisory capacity. Even in the matter of collecting tithes, their authority is non-political. They possess however certain rights of protection over members of their own body and others, illustrated by the right of sanctuary, benefit of clergy, and even the neckverse (C, XV., 129) that may deliver a thief from the gallows.

**Economic theories.** Economic theories, properly so called, are hardly to be found in the poem; but rather economic facts; though occasionally Langland gives expression to an isolated opinion that has an economic bearing, as for instance the following:

"In marchaundise ys no mede, ich may it wel avowe.

Hit is a permutacion a-pertelich o pene-worth for another."

(C, IV., 315). That is, in trade is no reward or bribe, but simply fair and open exchange, presumably taking account of labor involved as well as of the value of the commodities.

The "interesting allegory concerning questions of natural economy" mentioned by Ten Brink (Early Eng. Lit., p. 360) is an allegory concerning the want that preceded the pestilence, and the demand for

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\*For discussion of the religious significance of the character see topic *Christ as Piers Plowman*.

labor and the consequent plenty that followed it. Hunger proves himself as good a political economist as he is a physician, in compelling the idle to labor, and in providing food for them and the helpless (C, IX., 171 ff.). After the pestilence, when Hunger slept, laborers refused all but the best of fare and the highest of wages (C, IX., 331). Besides the general recklessness that accompanied and followed the plague (C, XXIII., 150), marriages became frequent and reckless (C. XI., 272), with the most unhappy results. The political conclusions are not far to seek, though Langland does not draw them, contenting himself with the moral ones.

"Seldom mosseth the marble-stone that men oft tread." One should not change craft or religion without good reason, and whether married or single, should not become a "runner about" from one place to another (A, X., 87 ff.).

God provided for man the three necessities of life,—food, drink, and clothing. These are for all, and should be partaken of, in measure, by all (C, II., 20). He gave the elements to serve man, and hence these, that is wit, water, wind, and fire, should be free to all (C, II., 17; C, X., 55).

Though Langland teaches that Christian men should be in common rich (C, XVII., 43), his indignant renunciation elsewhere of the communistic principle (C, XXIII., 277) must mean that he believes not in actual community of ownership, but rather in reasonable equality; those who have more, caring from their abundance for those who have less.

Langand is also alive to some of the evils and dangers of municipal life (C, IV., 90 ff.). Where the good and evil are so closely associated together, it must often happen that the good suffer with the evil, as well as because of them.\*

### 3. THEOLOGICAL AND RELIGIOUS TEACHING.

On other subjects Langland may have held reflected opinions; here if anywhere they should be his own. Yet we find little of novelty. His teaching is simply the teaching of the church, but he shows how far from this teaching has diverged the practice of men. This was apparent to many others. Gower too spoke in the "Vox Clamantis" (1381), but not until after the voice of Langland had been heard, and had produced marked results.

Here as elsewhere Langland states his doctrines, whether of theology, religion, or ethics, not systematically, but as they are needed to enforce some practical truth; and it is doubtful whether he had

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\*The description of the life of various classes of society, especially the very poor, is of economic importance, but has been fully discussed by Geunther. See "Englisches Leben."

ever given any attention to the attempt of the scholastics to systematize and explain, though he necessarily made use of their conclusions, as far as they had become a part of the doctrines of the church. In proceeding with the treatment of this topic, I shall aim to separate the formal and doctrinal from the practical.

a. THE SUPERNAL AND THE INFERNAL.

**The Trinity.** The doctrine of the Trinity is repeatedly enunciated, with profuse illustration. God is Truth, or His throne is Truth, "the trone that trinity ynne sitteth" (C, II., 134). Belief in the Trinity is the most fundamental of the articles of faith (B, X., 230-238). There are three Persons, but each is God himself, and all are God, and are "nought in plurel noumbre;" yet in the act of creation, God though "synguler hym-self" used the plural verb *faciamus*, thus implying, Langland says, that a greater agency was at work than His word alone (B, IX., 35). God is without beginning; the Son is the savior from death and the devil; the Holy Ghost is of both; and the Trinity is the Creator of man and beast. This is the summary of the "artikle of the feithe;" but this is hard to understand, hence the illustrations elsewhere given.

God in the act of creation, but without the Son and Spirit, would be as a lord who would write letters but lacked a pen and parchment (Ibid.). The three Persons of the Trinity are the three props of the tree of Charity (C, XIX., 1-52). Against the world stands *Potencia-Dei-Patris*; against the wind of the flesh resists *Sapiencia-Dei-Patris*, which is Christ; and *Spiritus-Sanctus* is used to support the tree when shaken by the devil, and also as a weapon to strike him down.

Christ's coat of arms, when he jousts in the armor of Piers Plowman (C, XIX., 188, and parallel passages in B), is three Persons in one banner, each separate from the other, yet one speech and one spirit springeth out of all; there is but one wit and one will, and though "sondry to seo upon, *solus deus* he hoteth." The Trinity is like Christ, Christendom, and the Church, or like Adam, Eve, and Abel, that is husband, wife, and child. Eve proceeded from Adam, and Abel was of them both, yet these three are but one in manhood. So is the Son of the Father, and the Holy Spirit of them both (C, XIX., 210-240). Abraham states that God appeared to him as three Persons "goyinge a-thre right by my gate," and in what follows is a curious adaptation of the grammar to the circumstances. Abraham rose up and revered God, and right fair greeted *Him*, and washed *their* feet and wiped them. After *they* had eaten, *He* told Abraham and his wife their inmost thoughts (C, XIX., 245).

The Trinity is like a hand (C, XX., 111-167). The Father is the fist, including the Son and Spirit; the Son is the fingers, and the Holy Spirit the palm. The Trinity is like a candle (C, XX., 168-228) of wax, wick, and fire. The wax and the wick twine together like Father and Son, the fire proceedeth from them both, and of the Three or the One comes the light that serves laborers to see by. It is doubtful whether any of these illustrations are Langland's own.

**God.** The attributes and function of each Person of the Godhead are specified in connection with the above illustrations, and elsewhere. God as the moral ruler of the universe is Truth. As its creator and physical ruler, He is identified with Nature, or Kynde (C, XI., 151). At the close of the poem, Langland seems for a time to have separated his conception of Nature from that of God (C, XXIII., 80); but even there Nature's ravages cease as soon as men amend, and the agency of God is still apparent (Ibid., 109).

God created man, endowed him with the Holy Spirit, and adapted the earth for his occupancy (B, IX., 33-47; C, II., 17 ff.). God is without beginning, the founder of all things in heaven, having established the orders of angels (C, II., 104). He is the fountain of power and justice, yet commissioned the Son and Spirit to open to men the gates of mercy (C, XX., 111-134, 168-209). His throne upon earth is the heart of man (C, VIII., 254 ff.); he has closed within the castle of the body the soul, which is betrothed to him (C, XI., 132), and has established conscience as a ruler and guardian of the castle. By sin He is concealed from man, as the sun by the clouds (Ibid., 160).

**The Holy Spirit.** The especial attribute and name of the Holy Spirit is Grace (C, XIX., 52). The Holy Spirit is the Comforter of the holy. As the palm directs the fingers, the Holy Ghost was the Inspirer and Director of the Son upon earth (C, XX., 116).

The palm is purely the hand, and hath power of himself  
 Otherwise than the closed fist, or workmanship of the fingers,  
 For the palm hath power to put out the joints  
 And to unfold the fist, for to him it belongeth,  
 And to receive that the fingers reach, and refuse if him liketh,  
 All that the fingers and the fist feel and touch,  
 Be he grieved with their gripe, the Holy Ghost lets fall. (C, XX., 140).

When the palm is hurt the hand is useless; a simile which hints at the unpardonable sin (Ibid., 161). If the palm be unhurt, one may help himself, though the fingers ache.

The Holy Ghost converts the power of God into mercy, and the mercy of Christ into forgiveness where repentance is, and there only; otherwise it is ineffectual, as a spark struck from flint and steel, without matches prepared to receive it. It directs men on the road to

Truth (God) after repentance (C, XXII., 213-228), and besides, teaches them wit and craft, love and humility.

**Christ as Piers Plowman.** Christ is mentioned in the poem under two different aspects; in his own proper personality as the Son of God, as in the illustrations already given; and in His human personality as Piers Plowman. Piers is at first a simple plowman, unmistakably such; and at the close of the poem he takes on as unmistakably the character and attributes of the Son of God. But the author has accomplished the transition in a very rude and imperfect manner, full of inconsistencies and contradictions, which he apparently perceived but was unable to remove.

At first the plowman is introduced to show that real knowledge of Divine things is found rather in the humble than in the learned, whom Pride may have turned from the right way. To make the beginning still more simple, it is not Grace that teaches Piers, but the secondary ministers, Conscience and Kyndewit (C, VIII., 184). The allegorical way that Piers points out leads past the various landmarks of the Ten Commandments, to a court or castle, whose moat is Mercy, the wall Wit, the battlements Christianity, and the buttresses Believe-and-be-saved. Within, the houses are roofed with Love and Leal-Speech. The bars are of Obedience, the bridge is Pray-well, each pillar is of Penance and Prayers to Saints, the hooks that the doors hang on are Alms-deeds. Grace keeps the gate; his servant is Amend-you, and at the postern gates the porters are the seven virtues.

He who points out this short and easy way to a Celestial City older than Bunyan's, is at first only a simple hind; but he soon begins to assume something of authority, in response to the request that he act as guide. In yielding to this request, Piers begins to reveal the second and most important aspect of his character, that of teacher. He may not go as guide until he has finished plowing his half acre; and that he may finish the sooner, the seekers after Truth set to work to help him. Yet in this passus (C, IX) it is Hunger rather than Piers that exhibits some of the attributes of Christ, and after Piers makes his will, Hunger himself becomes the teacher, and advises Piers as to the proper manner of managing the many worthless among his laborers. Here Piers is again merely a plowman, but a man in authority over his half acre, like a head harvestman.

In the next passus, Truth sends to Piers, forbidding the proposed journey; but sends him a pardon for himself, his heirs, and his servants. This pardon is interpreted with reference to several classes of men, until finally a priest questions both pardon and interpretation, and a dispute is the consequence. Here is a new phase of the development. Piers is not made one of the clergy; but in giving him

the power to pardon, Langland introduces the idea that pardon may come to the humblest without the mediation of any human instrumentality; and also that the humblest may serve as an accepted minister of Truth to others, if his own life be true. Finally the lesson of this passus, which is the focal point of the entire poem, is summed up in this; that while the pope has the power of pardon and penance and masses avail to save souls, better than all and surer than all is Dowel, a humble and godly life; and he who lives such a life has not only pardon for himself, but may secure it for others. Thus by implication, Piers Plowman becomes a minister of Christ, and another step is taken in the development of the character.

But a new conception of Piers entered the mind of the author, and he proceeded to expand in Text B his first answer to the question, "What is Dowel?" After expressing this conception, he discovered that he had not made it consistent with that already given, and made an effort to reconcile the two in the latest revision of the poem, but without entire success. The next reference to Piers Plowman occurs at the dinner where Will, the author, in his search for Dowel, comes to table with Reason, Clergy, Conscience, and Study (C, XVI.; B, XIII). The author is thinking of Piers as Christ, but seems to confuse in him no fewer than three different characters. He says of him that he "sette alle sciences a soppe saue loue one" (B, XIII., 124), a remark that was made of Christ by Study (B, X., 206), though of course based on the teaching of Christ. In the same passage (B, XIII., 123), Clergy says "Pieres the Plowman hath impugned us alle;" but (B, X., 442) it was Will, the author, that impugned Clergy, though his words were again taken from the teachings of Christ, and were in this case directly ascribed to Him. Lastly Piers and Christ are mentioned in successive sentences, as though they were intended to be separate characters (B, XIII., 132-133). Here then are confounded in a few lines, Christ, Piers Plowman, Study, and Will himself, though the author's general meaning is clear. But in view of these facts it can hardly be said that the identification of Piers Plowman with Christ is as yet, by any means direct or complete.\*

Langland next speaks of Piers Plowman as possessing the power to read men's hearts, and help them to be charitable or to love one another (B, XV., 190); yet here, while he is undoubtedly thinking of Christ as Piers Plowman, he carelessly keeps the two characters apart by referring to Christ by name in the preceding line (188). Finally he settles for us the question as to what his meaning really

\* In B. XIII., 237, the priest bids the people pray for Piers Plowman; and in C. XVI., Haukyn is Piers Plowman's prentice. These references balance; the first seems to contemplate the human side of the character, the second the divine.

by saying in so many words, albeit in Latin, that Piers is Christ (B, XV., 206), "*Petrus, id est Christus.*" But we are not allowed to rest in this assurance; for in a short time we find them again separated, almost hopelessly. In Text B, Piers Plowman appears to Will in a vision, describes and explains to him the tree of Charity or True-love, and states that it is to save the fruit of this tree, Piers Plowman's fruit, that Christ is commissioned. At first nothing here interferes with identification, but finally we come to the statement (B, XVI., 104) that after the birth of Christ, Piers acts as His teacher.

Langland evidently perceived the inconsistency, and attempted to remove it. In the C-text, the references to the words of Piers Plowman (C, XVI., 131)\* are made somewhat more general, and less suggestive of other characters. However he makes matters rather worse instead of better by introducing into the allegory Piers' sudden and mysterious appearance at the dinner, and his equally sudden disappearance, accompanied by Reason. Here Piers utters in person the words elsewhere ascribed to Christ (C, XVI., 138) and makes use of miraculous power. From this we might conclude that Langland aimed to make unmistakable the divinity of Piers; but he again puzzles us by omitting the formal statement that Piers is Christ. But though he omits this formal statement, he removes another inconsistency, by ascribing the whole of the action of the passus (B, XVI.) to Freewill instead of Piers Plowman, including the mention of him as teacher of Christ, thus leaving us at liberty to assume for ourselves the identity of Piers and Christ, if we choose to do so.

But still another conception is presented in the twenty-first passus, making it for a time again impossible to regard Piers and Christ as one. In passus XXI. the Plowman reappears in his human character, with new attributes, gradually growing more like Christ until the end of the poem. In the preceding passus a character is introduced which is named simply the Samaritan, but which is conceived as Christ in the flesh (not the conception just discussed), as is shown when in Passus XXI. Christ appears in person, and it is explained that he wears the armor of Piers Plowman, and resembles the Samaritan. Here reappears the idea mentioned in B, XVI.; in both texts it is stated that Jesus comes to joust with the foul fiend to redeem the fruit of Piers the Plowman. We begin now, as it would be perfectly consistent to do had no mention of Piers been made since Passus X., with two persons, Christ himself, and Piers Plowman, his humble servant or minister, whose armor Christ wears. In the armor of Piers, that is, in the body of man, the life of Christ is

\* Parallel with B, XIII. See p. 252.

described; then his apocryphal visit to hell, whence he brings souls of many. At last (C, XXII) the author sees Piers Plowman "peynted al bloody," resembling in all things our Lord, and asks question point blank, Is this Piers Plowman, or is it Christ? Conscience answers, It is Christ with his cross, conqueror of Christendom.

Not yet, however, is it necessary to make the identification absolute; we still have Christ in the armor of Piers, and Piers is still servant whose armor Christ wears. Piers is now more formally endowed with the functions of the clergy; he receives from Christ the power to forgive sin, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. He is commissioned by Grace, the Holy Spirit, as procurator, reeve, registrar, to receive debts due. As a purveyor and plowman of the earth, with a team consisting of the four gospels, and another of the four fathers, Austin, Ambrose, Gregory, and Jerome, he receives, for sowing, the seed of the four cardinal virtues, and is ordered to build a barn to contain the harvest. The barn finished, Piers goes forth through the world with Grace, to cultivate Truth. While he does this, his friends and neighbors are attacked by the host of Antichrist; and the laborers flee into the barn, Holy Church, where under Conscience they attempt to defend themselves. At last the enemy through treachery obtain entrance to the barn, and secure such an advantage that Conscience girds himself to go forth and battle Piers Plowman to the rescue. Here the poem ends, and it is the last reference that seems again to make Piers Plowman one with Christ.

To the question, therefore, Who or what is Piers Plowman? no consistent answer can be given, if we attempt to reconcile all the various interpretations, or if we attempt to reconcile all three with each other. In one case, Professor Skeat, for instance, interprets Piers to mean the pope, bishops, the whole church, Christ, the clergy, in almost as many consecutive lines of C, XXII. Again we have to reconcile the author's own statement that Piers is Christ with his equally plain teaching that Piers is a servant of Christ.

The interpretation of the character of Piers that seems to record more discrepancies than any other is this: Let Piers Plowman denote man endowed with the spirit of Christ, or human nature in its highest form (Skeat, Notes, p. 250), until the end of the poem is reached, and Conscience sets out in search of him. Then and there he may be assumed to take the character of Christ, but in this passage it may be regarded as a natural climax, and a fitting conclusion to the whole. If this interpretation be kept in view, it does not matter whether Piers be understood in special instances to mean pope

XIX., 424; C, XXII., 428), bishop, or plowman. It will however be necessary to reject Professor Skeat's explanation of these lines (C, XXII., 213):—

“Tho by-gan Grace to go with Peers the Plouhman,  
And consailede hym and Conscience the comune to someny;”—

the summons being in order that the commons may be provided with means of livelihood, and of defense against Anti-Christ. Of this passage Professor Skeat says (Notes, 268), “Here Grace is the Holy Ghost, and Piers the Plowman is still Christ; the latter title not being used of Christ's deputed successors till line 258 below, though the name of *peers* has been once so used above in line 183.” But there can hardly be a distinction between “peers” and Piers the Plowman, particularly as the “peers” of line 188 appears in the preceding line (187) at full length as “Peers the Plouhman.” The special gifts that are afterwards mentioned proceed from the Holy Spirit, not from Piers. Moreover, at the next mention of Piers, Grace calls him “my plowman upon earth,” a statement fully as consistent with his humanity as with his divinity.

That objection to the suggested interpretation, which is based on the account of Piers Plowman at the dinner (C, XVI., 138), cannot be disposed of, unless we call the passage a blunder on Langland's part. Here he certainly means Christ and as certainly calls Him Piers Plowman; but a reason for doing so, other than that suggested, is not apparent.

We have remaining, after the passages mentioned, the final reference to Piers Plowman as to one who alone can save the church. This reference does make him Divine; but for this exaltation of his character we are now fully prepared. Piers, with the exception mentioned, has been taking on more and more of the Divine character without merging in it the human, until at this point, with a single touch, he is uplifted and glorified; and he who has hitherto been a fellow laborer and a fellow sufferer as well as a guide and teacher, suddenly, yet naturally, in a moment of deepest despair, becomes a Savior. Thus a light still beams; and the darkness in which the poem ends is not absolute, nor hopeless, but may be the darkness before the dawn.

**Christ the Son.** I conclude then that the conventional interpretation of Piers as Christ must be accepted as the conception which was undoubtedly in the author's mind when writing a certain part of the poem; but that in revision, he weakened the conception of Piers as Divine and strengthened that of Piers as man endowed with the Divine Spirit, thus bringing into greater harmony the several parts of his poem, but not completing the unifying process. To support this

conclusion, there is constant reference made throughout every part of the poem, to Christ in His own proper person as the Son of God, proving that to Langland Christ and Piers were ordinarily separate conceptions; and these references are as numerous or nearly so in those passages where Piers is most often mentioned, as elsewhere; "Christ" and "Piers" often standing side by side in consecutive lines.

From the references to Christ in his Divine personality may be gathered a tolerably complete life history and doctrinal teaching. In C, XIX. and XXI. are given the fullest accounts of the life of Christ, the first incomplete, the second much condensed. The first includes the incarnation, miracles, and betrayal; the second begins with Christ's last journey to Jerusalem, describes His trial and crucifixion, His descent into hell, and triumph there.

The martial and chivalric spirit of the Middle Ages appears, in that Christ rides to enter Jerusalem as a knight in armor to a tournament (C, XXI., 14). When He hangs upon the cross, none dare touch Him to wound, because He is a knight and a king's son; hence at last, the blind Longinus, himself a knight, is called on to deal the fatal blow, unwitting who his victim is. The blood streaming forth restores to Longinus his sight, whereupon he kneels to ask forgiveness of Christ, and by this act, as he is the Jews' champion, he yields to Christ the victory, and places the Jews at His disposal, according to the law of arms.

In C. XXII. Christ appears to Thomas, and ascends into heaven, deputing His power upon earth to Piers Plowman. Further we find His commission from the Father, and His forgiveness of His slayers (C, II., 164-168), the creed of the atonement, crucifixion, and redemption (C, VIII., 121 ff.), His relation to man as father, brother, savior (Ibid., 144), the power of His love to move and direct men (C, II., 149 ff.), the necessity of belief in Him as the Son of God (C, XII., 142 ff.) His poverty (C, XIV., 1-4) and especial love for the poor (C, XII., 292), and His all-embracing mercy (C, XII., 254 ff.).

**Mother of Christ.** Though the central figure in Langland's theology is Christ himself, he recognizes in accordance with the teaching of the church, the dignity and authority of His mother. She is frequently invoked by name (C, III., 2), or as intercessor with the Son (C, VII., 170). It is stated in Latin and again in English (C, VIII., 250-289) that she, under the name of Mercy, has a key to heaven, that both she and her Son may grant help to the sinful, and that there is no other help but through those two.

**Heaven.** The poem contains no picture of heaven, but only occasional references and suggestions. It is variously located, sometimes toward the east, from the point of view of the stage of the Miracle

Plays, and sometimes toward the south, from the traditional point of view. As to constitution and government (C, II., 104 ff.), there are among the angels ten orders of knighthood, and we may conclude that the multitude of the redeemed are the commons, and that among them there are degrees of bliss, for the thief who repented upon the cross (C, XV., 132) is not seated with the saints and martyrs, but upon a far lower level.

**Purgatory.** Langland believes with the church that souls repentant, but who have not made full restitution (C, XIII., 65: see topic Penance) may be purified in purgatory, and that the prayers of the good, masses, and special services avail to lighten their punishment. To sing at such services was his own employment (C, VI., 46). Good deeds enable kings and knights to pass purgatory easily (C, X., 9). Those who take bribes shall yield them again at one year's end, in a full perilous place called purgatory (B, VI., 42). The patient poor pass purgatory sooner than the rich (C, XIV., 31), and through perfect faith, one may pass purgatory penanceless (C, XII., 296).

**The Evil Spirit.** As was the contemporary belief (Skeat, Notes, 258), to Langland Lucifer is the chief of the fallen angels, the Prince of Hell, while Satan, the Duke of Death, is merely a subordinate under Lucifer. Chaucer (Monks Tale, line 14) applies the name Sathanas to Lucifer after his fall. In the passage where Langland introduces both (C, XXI., 262 ff.) Professor Skeat points out that there is some confusion in their traditional characters, since to Lucifer and not to Satan is ascribed the temptation of Eve (C, XXI., 315). But the characters are clearly differentiated. Satan counsels armed resistance to the approach of Christ; Lucifer knows this to be vain, but in his turn would meet Him with a legal plea, which Satan perceives to be useless. Subsequently Lucifer's subordinates accuse him of having lost to them their joy in heaven, and now through his deception of Eve the lordship of hell is also to be forfeited. For this deception Lucifer is bound, while the rest flee and hide.

Lucifer was formerly a member of the chief order of knighthood in heaven (C, II., 105). Believing that he was wittier and worthier than his Master (C, VI., 188), he sought to establish a kingdom for himself in the north part of heaven (C, II., 112) but on his way thither he failed and fell, and all his fellows; some in earth, some in air, some in hell deep—Lucifer lowest of them all, though still retaining his leadership.

Why Lucifer sought the north is a question Langland declines to answer, that he may spare the feelings of northern men (C, II., 105). We might take the statement (Ibid. 134) that active men need no

fire except on a holiday, as a hint that Lucifer's idea was to establish a kingdom in a country where the climate would compel his followers to be active and aggressive, and hence would insure stability of government. But Professor Skeat states that the conventional explanation (*Piers Plowman*, E. E. T. S. ed., Vol. IV., Section I., p. 35) is that Lucifer's malice in causing other angels to fall from heaven was like the coldness of the north winds that chill the flowers, and hence that the north was the only suitable place for him.

The devil, the same who deceived our first parents, and hence for consistency, Lucifer, though by tradition he should be called Satan, lies in wait for the fruit of the tree of charity, that is for the souls of men at death, and is continually endeavoring to batter them down from the tree. To him all robbers are especially near of kin (C, VII., 330, and parallel passages).

**Hell.** We have a more complete picture of the infernal region than of heaven (C, XXI) but still lacking in definiteness. Its location is more confused than that of heaven, it is toward the north in the passage just mentioned, toward the west (C, I., 16; C, II., 55), and toward the east (C, XXI., 19). The first comes from tradition, the second is the position opposed to that of heaven upon the Mystery stage, and the third is probably due (Skeat, Notes, 253) to the position of the mouth of hell upon a separate stage of the same platform.

There are degrees in hell as in heaven. Trajan, because his life was moral, was punished not deep in hell, but so high up that he could deliver thence, and is now in the lowest heaven (C, XV., 150; C, XIII., 75). With respect to the matter of deliverance from hell there is a difference of opinion between Truth and Mercy (C, XXI., 115-157 ff.). Those condemned under the Mosaic law may be delivered through the atonement of Christ, and the example of Trajan proves, in at least one instance, the power of prayer to deliver; but it is not certain that this establishes a rule, since the fate of Solomon, Socrates, and Aristotle is still in doubt (C, XII., 220; C, XV., 192).

#### 7. MAN—DUTIES AND TRANSGRESSIONS.

**Place in Creation.** The earth is for the habitation of man, and the elements and all creatures are for his service and delight (C, II., 17; B, XI., 389). Man is responsible for a double portion of wit and freewill (B, VIII., 55-56), yet often rules himself less according to Reason's teaching than do the other animals (C, XIV., 192). Men may be classified into three degrees of holiness, the married, the widowed, and the virgin (C, XIX., 71 ff.). He must not seek after knowledge beyond his natural portion (C, XIV., 222 ff.).

found than the character of Sloth (C, VIII., 1-67; cf. B. X., 306-309). They quarrel constantly with the friars over the profits of confession (C, VII., 119-129), and live as wolves among their own sheep (C, XVII., 241-278).

Priests who dwell in cities should be attached to some church (C, VI., 89). They should desire poverty as the more blessed condition, and, apparently, Wyclif's "poor priests" are commended (C, XIV., 101) while the spirit of the new movement is further approved in that Langland commends translation of the Bible (C, XI., 88). Priests should be created for their learning, and should be free born. But learning without the Spirit of God is emptiness; such clergy are easily turned from the faith; while the ignorant are always blind leaders of the blind. They may be lost, as were the builders of the ark (C, XII., 250), having their reward in this world, and forfeiting it in the next (A, III., 237). A priest must suffer all things, and pass by riches, wine, and women (C, XII., 103-118). Passus XVIII. gives one of the strongest pictures of what a perfect priest should be, in contrast with the depth of infamy to which many have fallen.

Priests may take no tithes of evil men, else they shall be punished in purgatory (C, VII., 300). They must be faithful to the minutest details of duty, and even "overskipping" in reading the services is a fault so serious as to be twice condemned (C, XIV., 119; XVIII., 118). Langland utters a point-blank denial of the general assumption of priests and monks that to them is due the first and best of everything (C, XVIII., 58-63):—

Help thy father first before friars and monks,  
And before priests and pardoners, or any people else.  
Help thy kin Christ bade, for there beginneth charity,  
And afterward await who hast most need,  
And there help if thou hast, and that hold I charity.

**Clergy as Scholarship.** Clergy means scholarship as well as priesthood. The advantages of Clergy are pictured in Passus XV. It has skill to confound its adversaries, makes record of the truth, teaches, and leads to salvation. Untaught men have a learning of their own, but it saves not souls; it is but knowledge of birds and beasts, and is folly without the Divine Spirit (C, XV., 72). Even a single line of Holy Writ in the memory has power to save a thief from the gallows (C, XV., 129). The clerk may protect himself and others; if he err, he destroys all faith of those about him, but if he does well, his followers do better (C, XVIII., 122).

**Friars.** The four orders of friars of which Langland usually speaks were the Eremite or Austin friars, or Augustines; the Carmelites, or white friars; the Dominicans, or Jacobins, or black, or preaching friars; and the Franciscans, Minorites, or grey friars. The fifth

Haukyn complains (C, XVI., 217 ff.) that for his support of the pope, he has received nothing in return (Cf. B-text), and wishes that the pope might subdue the pestilence, not daring to impute his failure to a lack of power or holiness in the pope himself, but ascribing it to the sinfulness of men upon whom the pestilence is sent. The schism of the popes probably gives rise to several allusions. No wit or strength of this world can make a peace between the pope and his enemies profitable to both (C, XVI., 173). It is wrong for the pope to pay men to make war upon other Christians, and the ways of peace are preferable for the good of the church, and of Christ's kingdom (C, XVIII., 234). Imperfect is the pope that all people should help, and sendeth them that slay such as he should save (C, XXII., 430).

**Cardinals.** As the most virtuous virtues are the cardinal virtues, cardinals should be most virtuous of men, and doubtless are so (C, I., 134). But a certain ignorant vicar, who has already impeached the pope, doubts this (C, XXII., 411-425), and looks upon cardinals rather as sources of all evil. Coming from Rome to bring messages and collect moneys, they are sources of great expense, lechers, and a curse to the country they come into.

**Bishops.** The principal charge, among many, against bishops, is that they seek sloth and ease, neglecting the care of souls, and are particularly careless of the command of Christ to preach the gospel to all nations; hence so-called bishops of foreign lands maintain residence in London or Rome, and never think of going elsewhere (C, XVIII., 187). They should be learned, wise, and holy; fearless in reproving sin, living as they teach. They are the rulers and judges in the church, and with the apostles may act as judges at domesday (C, X., 13-21). Their punishment will be according to their responsibility if they fail (Ibid., 255). But poisoned by the gift of lands as the church is, its bishops seek only for lands and money (C, XVIII., 220); often they purchase their positions (C, VI., 70), are ignorant of their duties, and allow their subordinates to deceive the people with false teaching, false miracles, and the sale of relics, images, and indulgences (C, I., 66-100).

**Parochial Clergy.** Upon the parochial clergy and friars, Langland expends all his energy and indignation. As with the bishops, the root of all is neglect of duty and eagerness for money. They leave their charges to seek silver in London, allow traveling pardoners to preach to their people, and divide with them the profits of the sale of indulgences or pardons. Often they are unchaste, proud, slothful, and ignorant. When pure, they often lack charity. As a complete antithesis to Chaucer's parson, nothing better could be

so on, can obtain no advantage from poverty; adversity teaches one to look to God for help (C, XVII., 95); to forsake possessions is to become kin to Christ. Poverty (C, XVII) is hateful to pride, has not to sit as judge, and is thus freed from care, is not troubled with evil winnings or appeals to lend, is temperate and defends the flesh from sins, gives health and strength, lives in peace, is wise, truthful, not covetous, a true laborer, does not overcharge, is the comfort and solace of the soul. Such is Langland's interpretation of a passage from Vincent of Beauvais.

**The Rich.** As obverse of this pictured, we have the rich, doomed to suffer in the next world for their joy in this, unless they have recourse to confession, contrition, and satisfaction. The rich are wasteful (C, I., 24), often dishonest, and, in that case, should not be entitled to the freedom of any city (C, IV., 112). They keep at their tables idle and worthless minstrels and jesters, to the neglect of the worthy poor (C, X., 128); and indulge there in idle disputation and infidel conversation (C, XII., 35). They are loved only for what they possess, and their giving is less pleasing to God than is the patient endurance of the poor (C, XVI., 282). They must beware lest they be condemned as Dives was, for sins of omission (C, XX., 228).

**King.** As already noted (page 244), the political duties of the king are founded upon the moral law. He must be generous (C, IV., 266), love the commons, his treasure (C, IV., 181), defend holy church (C, X., 12), and rule according to Dowel, Dobet, and Dobest (C, XI., 100), being accountable to Dobest. The meaning of the famous prophecy (B, X., 317-330; C, VI., 169-180), is doubtless that through a king, by virtue of his royal power, is the sole hope of reform in the church.

**Knights.** The true knight owes his faithful tenant kindness and fair speech, should take no bribe, be courteous, be no hearer of tales (C, IX., 19-53), dispute not conscience, or the rights of holy church (Cf. page 244).

**Pope.** There are many traces of an independent and critical attitude toward the head of the church, especially since there were in Langland's time two claimants of the position; and this independence of attitude seems to increase in later versions of the poem. Though in Text A (VIII., 8) he has spoken of the pope's pardoning power, in the parallel passage he transfers this power to Truth. But this power is again ascribed to the pope (C, X., 324) and the pope is undoubtedly meant (C, XXII., 188 ff.) where Piers Plowman is said to have the power to bind and unbind, and assoil of all sins save the failure to make restitution.

**General Duties.** If the teaching of the whole poem may be reduced to a word, man's duty is to love and labor. The duty of love and benevolence is constantly iterated, and its application is made specific in countless instances; while the duty of labor is the keynote struck in the beginning, and with all the author's power. Labor should be honest, and love should be according to law. For the rest, we may sum up Langland's teaching as that man's duty comprises the observance of the four cardinal virtues, and the avoidance of the seven deadly sins through the cultivation of their opposites (See C, XXII., 274; also C, VI. and VII). Langland places especial stress upon temperance, economy, humility, honesty, and truth.

**Active and Contemplative Life.** Attendance upon divine service upon Sunday is obligatory upon all (C, X., 221-245). Langland believes in all the observances of the church, but good works towards one's fellowmen, and faith, are of even greater value (C, II., 170-181; C, XII., 142-148). And one observance of the church, that of receiving windows commemorating the giver, he disapproves in toto, and gives warning that good deeds are not to be published (C, IV., 63-76). There are two kinds of life that are acceptable to Christ, the active and the contemplative; and both are blessed if lived in accordance with the law of God (B, VI., 249 ff.). To the contemplative life belong prayer and the observances of the church, but it must be lived in self-sacrifice, not self-seeking (C, II., 170-181); one may know Christ neither through words nor works, but through will alone (B, XV., 204). The active life may also be abused, as it is by Haukyn (C, XVI., 194 ff.), who finds the task of providing for his temporal wants so great that he lacks time to care properly for his own spiritual life; but if lived in faith, love, temperance, and humility, it is worthy and sure of heaven (B, XIV., 46-58). In another sense, the married life is active life, and widowhood and virginity are two degrees of the contemplative life (C, XIX., 71-83). The latter is perhaps the holier, if worthily lived.

**The Poor.** Langland, though he realizes the sins and shortcomings of the poor, provides them with all the consolation in his power, the conclusions of his philosophy of life. Since they suffer so much in this life, they shall surely be rewarded in the life to come, if they are patient under suffering (C, XIII., 194). Thus the equipoise will be restored; having winter here, they will have summer in heaven (A, XIV., 160), and may claim heaven as it were by right (C, XVII., 57, 103). The blessings of poverty in this life are also fully discussed (C, XIII., XIV., and XVII.; and B, XI). The poor are not in danger of enemies as are the rich; the sins of pride, gluttony, and

order, mentioned in the C-text, was probably that of the Trinity friars. crutched friars, or crossbearers (Cyc. Brit., IX., article Friars; Skeat, Notes, 9). For a description of the friar at his best, we should turn to the description of Charity (C, XVII., 297 ff.), though that description includes more than the friars alone. Charity rejoices with the glad and mourns with the sorrowing, fears no sickness or hardship, has no property and cares for none, goes on pilgrimages to the poor and those who are in prison, yet is merry at meat, and very good company. But finally we are told that he was found but once in a friar's frock, and that many years ago, in St. Francis' time.

For love of money friars too forsake their rules, trespass upon the parishes of the clergy to confess those afraid to confess to the priest who knows them best (C, XXIII., 286; C, IV., 38). They quarrel with the secular clergy, and among themselves; glose the gospel to suit themselves (C, I., 58) and for money pervert the teachings of better men (C, VII., 118), thus weakening the faith of man (C, XII., 54-60). For money they pardon the gravest sins, and prefer always to administer those offices of the church to which a fee is attached (C, IV., 38, XI., 65). They admit rich men to the privileges and benefits of their order by means of letters of fraternity, without requiring of them self-denial or vows, or aught else except liberal payments (C, I., 4-11; Skeat, Notes, 130). They are entitled to help and support only when they ask humbly and for what they need (C, IX., 146). But instead of asking humbly, they claim the best seats and best food, vaunt their own holiness (C, XI., 18), and preach best full of wine, even on the subject of temperance, and at the same time exalt the virtue of doing as one preaches (C, XVI., 65-127). They love to deal with idle matters, and those above the comprehension of the people (C, XVII., 230).

To sum up (see C, XIII., 230 ff.), they are welcome in holy church so long as they live after their rule and the example of the founders of the orders, and keep their numbers within reasonable limits. But their undue increase in number, their false philosophy, their shriving the guilty without due penance and restitution, will lead to the destruction of themselves if not of the church; and the Flatterer who is one of the defenders of the church, and drives Conscience forth into the world to seek the aid of Piers Plowman, is a friar.

**Hermits.** Hermits no longer live like the early anchorites (C, XIII., 13-36) but have their cells in public places, and wander abroad like friars and recreant priests (C, I., 51). Even more against them than the friars is the charge laid that they have chosen a life nominally religious to avoid labor (C, X., 188-254). In the life of

**Pilgrims and Palmers.** the pilgrims and palmers there seems to be nothing even nominally religious, except the pilgrimage itself, which Langland is disinclined to accept as a religious observance. Their leave to lie (C, I., 48) if not granted by the Pope, existed by common consent; and in another sense, a palmer, notwithstanding all his journeying, had not the remotest conception of the way to Truth.

**Nuns.** There is quarreling and unchastity even in the nunneries: a statement with which Gower is in accord (Morley, E. W., IV., 187). Langland approves the ordinance of Gregory that women shall not be admitted to the priesthood (B, V., 166; C, VII., 132-150).

**Lollers.** Partly in the church and partly out of it belongs the class of idle vagabonds, *lollers*, of whom are many hermits and pilgrims, besides many who think neither of hermitage nor pilgrimage. Langland resembled these, although they thought little of him (C, VI., 1-4). The growing tendency to apply the term to those who held and practiced new doctrines, or peculiar theories of life, is apparent in the poem; but the formal definition of it as given by Langland is as follows: (C, X., 215)

"He that lolleth is lame, other his leg out of ioynte,

Other meymed in som membre, for to meschief hit souneth (hinteth)."

But he himself applies it to a certain class lame only in a metaphorical sense,—

"And ryght so sothlyche such manere crenyles

Lollen aȝen the byleyve and lawe of holy church;"

showing that there was a general appreciation of the similarity between the idle beggars of the church, and the idle beggars who lay by the wayside, and feigned themselves wounded, crippled, or diseased.

**Merchants.** The especial charge against the merchants is, of course, that of deceitful dealing (confession of Avarice, C, VII., 196 ff.); but the dignity of their occupation is recognized, and they are bidden to buy and sell, and use their winnings in specified works of charity (C, X., 22 ff.; see also C, III., 222; C, IV., 112). The dangers and uncertainties of their business are also hinted at (C, VII., 278; C, IV., 33).

**Lawyers.** Lawyers, the term including political officials of all sorts, are particular friends of Lady Meed, and there is not one from the highest to the lowest who does not woo her. These are liars, lechers, brokers of evil, malicious prosecutors, extortioners, shielders of the guilty; they allow prisoners to escape either by opening doors, or by buying off the prosecutor, at the same time appealing to his sympathy, as was done in the case of Wrong (C, V., 45-65). Thus did many a bright noble baldly bear adown the wit and wisdom of West-

minster Hall (C, XXIII., 132); and it also appears that bright nobles could make "leal matrimony depart ere death come," and shape divorces (Ibid., 139).

The fullest enumeration of the evil deeds of judges and counselors is found in Richard the Redeless (III., 317-345), but probably has reference to the special abuses of a particular time. They foment quarrels, prolong cases, bring false charges, give judgment before giving evidence, and endanger the lives of those who complain. Magistrates share in the general corruption under Meed (C, IV., 109).

As toward the king, magistrates should judge justly, and as toward the people should impose fines and punishments in love and kindness (C, II., 157). All counselors should seek Truth, not gold or gifts (B, V., 53); and should give advice free to those who cannot afford to pay (C, X., 44-57; B, VII., 39-58).

#### C. DOCTRINES OF HOLY CHURCH.

**The Church.** The source of the church is the Trinity. She is a lovely lady descended from the castle of Truth (C, II., 4). In one passage she calls herself the daughter of Christ and duchess of heaven (C, III., 31); while in another is conveyed the more conventional idea that the church is the bride of Christ. More interesting than these is the account of the church as the barn of Piers Plowman, which becomes the church militant when assailed by Anti-Christ, where Conscience is commander, and Peace gate-keeper. Meed is the bitter enemy of the church. The church has been poisoned by the endowment of lands (C, XVIII., 220). From foes without, and unworthy servants within, she has come to low estate, and needs to be clothed new (C, VI., 180), but this is misfortune, not fault. Her law is charity (C, XVIII., 124), belief, loyalty; and she is a refuge for all men, except the evil who have not forsaken their wickedness (C, XI., 76). She is the custodian of the bodies of men after death (C, IX., 100); the guardian of the sick and helpless (C, IX., 138), of those that lack full understanding, of fatherless children, poor widows and helpless maids (B, IX., 66). Sponsors in the church must see that their godchildren walk uprightly (B, IX., 74).

**Sins.** The chief auxiliaries of Anti-Christ in this world are the seven deadly sins, of whom, if any distinction may be made, Langland seems to regard Pride, Avarice and Gluttony as chief; judging from the fullness of his descriptions (C, VII. and VIII.). Gower's treatment of this subject (*Confessio Amantis*) is more complete and formal than Langland's. His list includes all the subordinates, as follows:

1. Pride; hypocrisy, disobedience, presumption, boasting, vain glory.
2. Envy; grudging of good fortune, gladness at grief, de

traction, dissimulation, supplantation. 3. Wrath; melancholy, chiding, hate, contest, homicide. 4. Sloth; delay, pusillanimity, forgetfulness, negligence, idleness, somnolence, despair. 5. Avarice; jealousy, cupidity, perjury, usury, parsimony, ingratitude, violent seizure, robbery, secret theft, sacrilege. 6. Gluttony; drunkenness, delicacy. 7. Lust.

Langland's order is: pride, envy, anger, lechery, avarice, gluttony, sloth, and his treatment has life as well as simplicity. Each sin is represented by a single penitent, with the exception of Pride, which has two exponents, and the personal appearance of each is as fully portrayed as are the various forms of misconduct in each. If the confession of each be followed through in detail, it will be found that Langland has in mind probably an exposition similar to that of Gower, but is treating it with his usual freedom.

The picture of Glutton is most lifelike of all. That of Sloth is only less so; he is a fat and greasy country priest, ignorant, careless of duty and offices, riding to hunt, denying debts, and cheating his servants. Through Sloth we may trace a way to the unpardonable sin. Sloth leads to despair, and the branches that lead men to sloth and despair are (C, VIII., 70), lack of sorrow for sin, neglect of penance and almsdeeds, living against belief and law, neglect to study; all of these cause man to doubt the grace of God, and hence prevent him from repenting and calling for mercy. Yet all sin may be forgiven if there be contrition (C, XIII., 71); and sorrow of heart is satisfaction for such as may not pay otherwise (C, XX., 296), though restitution and good works should be added if possible. The unpardonable sin, the sin against the Holy Ghost, has many forms, but the chief is to slay an innocent man, a follower of Christ. (C, XX., 260-296). Even this slayer might be pardoned did he not despair of obtaining mercy and hence fail to repent. Hence Sloth, which leads to despair and disbelief in the power of God, is one of the most dangerous of the deadly sins,

**Salvation.** How then may I save my soul, asks Will (C, II., 80). Holy Church answers, Live in truth and love, be true of tongue and hands, do good works therewith, and do no man ill. If one's intent and effort be true, there is pardon for failure (C, IV., 350). To remove the stain of actual sin are repentance, penance, and faith (C, IV., 401). These place men in a right relation to God.

Salvation is of grace, not works (C, XII., 254-271), and grace may be withdrawn (C, VIII., 283 ff.); yet there is merit in good works if they be inspired by love and a sincere devotion to the idea of right, as is taught by the story of Trajan. Faith without works is inefficient and may fail to save (C, XIII., 92 ff.). And faith and good works

do not save without the Atonement of Christ (C, VIII., 121; C, XX., 81); those who died under the Mosaic dispensation awaited in hell the coming of Christ as their deliverer.

The prayers of the righteous for those still upon earth (C, IV., 98) avail to save souls from purgatory, and in the case of Trajan the prayers of a most holy man delivered him from hell itself, a result due to his just life as well as to prayer. But Solomon, Socrates and Aristotle are supposed to be still in hell (C, XII., 220). However Langland expresses some doubt of the traditional belief, and reasons that since a just man shall *hardly* be saved in the day of judgment, it therefore follows that he may be saved. A true man that lives as his law teaches, and believes that there be no better, or would have kept it if there were, and lives and dies in that will, for him there certainly is commendation, his faith is great, and hope of reward depends upon that faith (B, XII., 268-293; C, XV., 192-217).

One may sin often and yet be saved, as one in a boat may fall within it and be in no danger (C, XI., 30). The salvation of the ignorant may be more easily accomplished than that of the learned; but those who are saved late or narrowly may not expect a high place in Heaven (C, XV., 92-145).

Christ may not be renounced after full acceptance, but neglect of duty to Him will be punished in purgatory until all arrearages are made up (C, XIII., 53-70).

**Baptism.** To be baptized is the command of Christ (B, XIV., 183), and children are not saved without it (B, XI., 82). It washes away all sin, and is the pledge of salvation (B, XIV., 181-190). There is a baptism of font, of blood, and of fire (C, XV., 207). It should be administered by a Christian only, except among the heathen, Saracens and Jews at the approach of death, when an unbeliever may perform the rite. In such a case belief and baptism are sufficient to save; but ordinarily to belief and baptism must be added fulfillment of law (B, XIV., 345-359).

**Confession, Penance, Absolution.** If a man sin after baptism, the three steps toward forgiveness are contrition, confession, and satisfaction (C, XVII., 25). Contrition makes deadly sin venial, and contrition and faith may save even without confession. Confession slays the sin; and satisfaction, which may be interpreted penance or restitution, buries it out of sight and makes it like a wound healed (B, XIV., 82-96). It is implied (B, XI., 94) that the secrets of the confessional are to be preserved.

Though Langland formally teaches the duty of penance, he really attaches to it little importance; in fact he satirizes it by making his penitents propose their own penances, and these often apparent

rather than real. Pride will wear a hair shirt. Lechery drink with the duck only, Glutton will eat no fish on Friday, not stating whether he means to abstain from food altogether or substitute roast beef, Sloth will be at church before day every Sunday for seven years, a robber will polish his pikestaff and make pilgrimages. Repentance, the confessor, pays little attention to these propositions, but insists upon restitution, particularly in the case of Avarice; and after that, prayer. If one may not restore his illgotten goods to the owner, he may bear them to the bishop; perhaps another touch of satire. The only pilgrimages that Langland approves are those to visit the sick and unfortunate (C, XVII, 32; C, V, 122), confessors should enjoin for penance, peace, forgiveness, and love, and those that make pilgrimages to Rome should rather seek Truth (C, VI, 195). Yet, after stating that without contrition, confession and satisfaction, prayer, penance, pilgrimage, and writing in windows are all in vain, he admits that with these three essentials, telling of beads, pilgrimages, privy penances and almsgiving are as aids to holiness C, XXII, 377; C, XVII, 29).

Shrift cares for the wounded of Holy Church (C, XXIII, 306). Pardon is sure for those that truly repent and believe and amend, even without human intervention. Power to forgive sins is depoted to Piers Plowman (C, X, 8; C, XXII, 185); yet Piers tears up his pardon and prefers to put his trust in prayer, penance (or restitution), and right living; while the pardon itself proves to be simply the promise that the righteous shall inherit eternal life (B, VII, 111 B). True laborers shall have pardon (C, X, 60-68). Patient endurance of poverty, sickness and suffering in this life will be accepted as expiation, at least in part (C, X, 175). In short, while the pope has power to absolve from sin and purgatory without penance, and though contrition and confession should be life long (C, XI, 53), and prayer and penance have power to save, nothing is so sure toward this end as Dowel right living (C, X, 318 to end).

**Dowel, Dobet, Dobest.** The key to heaven is therefore not to be found in formal observances of any kind,

Be mak no thy to low Christum, and all that thou canst pray,  
Dowel and penance day and night ever,  
And purchas and the pardon of Pampuna and of Rome,  
And indulgences enough, and be-egged to thy kind,  
The Holy Ghost heareth thee not, nor helpeth thee, be thou  
certain (C, XX, 210-220) —

but it is found only in Dowel, Dobet, and Dobest, and having thus suggested the question, What are these? it is not strange that Langland devoted the major part of his poem, if not of his life, to answering it.

Without multiplying references, the general conclusion is that Dowel is to purify one's own life and action; Dobet is to care for the needs of others; Dobest is to act with authority, teaching, leading men toward the right, warning the doers of evil, and evidently involves something of clergy (learning). Hence, while to engage in priestly offices is Dowel and possibly Dobet, it is by no means necessarily Dobest. To apply this to Langland himself, in singing the seven psalms for the souls of the departed he was in accord with Dobet; but in writing the Vision of Piers Plowman he was most assuredly with Dobest. Thus did he carry the gospel among men; a gospel new in its application if not in its underlying principles. Without rejecting or questioning the doctrines of his church, he interpreted them in the light of a "clene conscience," and thus restored them often to their original simplicity and opened the way to the Reformation.

**Our Neighbor.** Passus X, of the poem may be called the doctrinal passus. One of the most moving and eloquent passages is that defining "our neighebores" (C, X., 71-138) as "the most needy."

**Marriage.** Marriage between the humble should be undertaken at the will of parents, and the counsel of friends, and then by assent of the parties concerned (B, IX., 112). It is unprofitable without offspring (C, XIX., 222). The law of heredity imposes on every one the greatest care in choosing a mate (C, XI., 233 ff.). There is a time for marriage, and those conceived out of time become false folk and faithless, thieves and liars as was Cain (A, X., 127; C, XI., 202 ff.). Good should wed good, though they no goods have, and those who marry for goods shall lead lives unlovely. Maidens should marry maidens, widowers widows, and every manner secular man may wed; a statement which Professor Skeat construes to include the secular clergy (Notes, 145). We have noted that hasty marriages abounded after the pestilence, and that divorces were not unknown (page 265).

**Unbelief.** Idle scholastic discussion of matters connected with Scripture (C, XII., 35 ff.) and careless preaching have brought a lack of faith in Holy Writ. Scripture should not be shown to those who love to raise idle questions, and preaching to those whose hearts are not ready to receive is useless. If it were not possible to dispute any of the teachings of Holy Church, if the truth of all were absolutely certain, one means of grace would be lost to man; there would no longer be any faith if faith were certainty (C, XII., 159).

**Predestination.** If all that Scripture and Clergy teach be true, salvation will be impossible for many (C, XII., 201-223); for they say that man's name is written in the book of life, or else not written,

long before he is born. Perhaps for this reason, Solomon's titles are lost; if they wrought well, and are now in pain, it is unwise for us to imitate them. Again Scripture teaches (C, 40-60) that many were summoned to the feast, and only a few were chosen. Will thereupon wonders whether he is chosen or not, though he reflects that Holy Church had received him at the time of God's choosing. He concludes finally that Christ's invitation is for all who will; that all the world may claim and receive through His blood and through baptism. No wicked man is lost but if he will (C, XV., 135); one thief upon the cross saved Him, and if it be asked why the other did not, no clerk can answer. **Charity.** The formal definition of Charity (C, XVII., 25) is referred to in describing the good friar (page 263). Again Freewill defines charity as the fruit of the tree of True Love before the discussion is well begun charity becomes the tree and man the fruit. It is supported on three props representing three persons of the Trinity; its blossoms are Kind Speech and Mercy, its stem Ruth or Pity, and its leaves the words of the Holy Church (Skeat, Notes, 235). Charity, represented by the maritan (C, XX., 46) and typifying Christ, saved the wretch when Faith and Hope had passed by him.

**Cardinal Virtues.** The four cardinal virtues are prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice (C, XXII., 274). At the beginning of Passus XXIII. it is said that Necessity, or Need, is superior to the virtues except temperance; and that in need one may take counsel of Conscience. One may take meat to save life, will give, and the same is true of cloth and drink. Then comes a statement of the deficiencies of some of the virtues. Fortitude is to go too far or not far enough, justice has to be guided by prudence and prudence may make mistakes. Then we are told of the Need. It makes men humble, was chosen by philosophers, Christ, and will at last turn to joy, so shall one not be ashamed to beg and to be in want. The purpose of this remarkable passage may be to show the weakness of the excuses that have been made in the preceding passus by those who fail to observe the virtues, and to show what is the only valid excuse for a failure from what is commonly reckoned virtue.

**Communion.** The Holy Communion may be received worthily after restitution, implying the preceding steps, contrition and confession. As to the Real Presence therein, God's body might be as bread without clergy (B, XII., 87). One is never right straight he has eaten the body of Christ, and drunk His blood (C, 2). The blessed bread conceals the body of God (C, XXII., 38).

language might have been used by Wyclif, but there is no question as to Langland's simple acceptance of the church's teaching.

#### 4. LANGLAND'S PHILOSOPHY.

Langland's work was intended to have a moral significance only. The efforts of the scholastics had been directed chiefly towards reducing the vast mass of theological doctrine and dogma to something like system. We do not find that Langland is especially systematic; but we do find some traces of scholastic methods, as well as of scholastic conclusions. We might in fact say that the whole of the theological and religious teaching of which an exposition has been given is scholastic, so far as it is systematic and reasoned out in all its parts. But what was scholastic in this respect was common property, and not distinctive of Langland; in fact, in his lack of system and in his belief that it is not possible to give reasons for all one's beliefs, he was decidedly unscholastic. He advances many doctrines theological and doctrines religious, but as to their bearing upon each other he cares little. The curious questions and conceits with which the mediaeval scholastics used to amuse themselves would certainly have been condemned by him (Page 269; C, XII., 35 ff.). But to tell how two persons of the Trinity slew the third is irreverent rather than scholastic; and Langland himself asks many of the questions which used to engage their attention. Of such a nature perhaps are the questions, Why did Lucifer attempt to establish a kingdom in the north (C, II., 112)? Why was the Fall permitted (B, X., 105)? Why should men now suffer for the transgression of Adam (B, X., 111)? If Scripture be true, how can any rich man reach heaven (C, XII., 200)? Why did one thief upon the cross repent and not the other (C, XV., 14)? Are Solomon, Socrates, and Aristotle saved (C, XV., 193)? Are there not also traces of scholasticism, perhaps of sophistry, in the doctor's argument (C, XVI., 172) with Patience; in the discussion between Lucifer, Satan, Goblin, and Christ (C, XXI., 272); and in the argument of Need (C, XXII., 150)? In the latter case Langland seems to adopt as his own the reasoning which he uses; in the other case his attitude is shown by his placing the argument in the mouths of those whom he has already satirized, and by the formal remonstrance which he makes against empty discussions (C, XII., 35). This important passage is made more significant by the fact that the remonstrance is made by Study, and is aimed at her husband, Wit, who has nothing to say in self-defence. Hence we may conclude that exercising speculation without the direction of some safe guide, the Bible or the Fathers, is an indefensible thing.

Wit must be directed by Study; Study must be occupied in a proper manner; questions that may not be answered must be passed by, and answers that may not be understood must be accepted on authority, by faith.

**Langland's mental habit.** Langland thinks too much and too widely not to touch sometimes upon the questions of the physical and mental life of man. For instance, he wonders why man, with his double portion of intelligence, is so prone to make mistakes; while other animals with their lesser portion, always act rightly with reference to their own interests (C, XIV., 143). Yet, recognizing the difference in phenomena he did not for a moment conceive a distinction between instinct and reason, but immediately gave up the whole question, fearing that he was treading upon forbidden ground. But this speculative passage, though it ends in a stinging self-rebuke, shows that his mind is of too high an order to follow a beaten path without thinking what lay beyond it, and deepens our respect for his mental power.

Langland's inveterate habit of personification sometimes leads to apparent confusion as to the meaning of terms; but in general his distinctions are clear when his conceptions can be disentangled from their personal embodiment. The moral significance of his terms is to be taken into account along with their mental and physical meaning, as this moral meaning was to him their chief one.

**The Mental Faculties.** It seems probable that Langland's own ideas of the meaning of the various names for the mental faculties were derived from the passage translated, not altogether accurately, in Passus XVII, (B, XV, 23, C, XVII., 182). The character called Anima in B, Freewill in C, is defined according to its various functions as Anima (the vital principle) when it quickens the body; Animus (the reasoning principle or rational soul) when it will or would; Mens (the power of thought, the mind) when it understands or knows; Memoria, when it recalls what has taken place ("makes moan to God"), Ratio, when it judges, Sensus, when it feels and perceives ("and that is wit and wisdom, the well of all crafts"); Conscientia, when it challenges (claims or excuses) or challenges not, bargains for or refuses (accepts or refuses); Amor, when it loves, Liberrum arbitrium, when it will do or not do good deeds or ill (Lat.: turns from evil to the good); and Spiritus, when it flees from the body and leaves it lifeless. In the B-text all these terms except Free Will are given as names for Anima; but in the C-text they are given as names for Free Will, which is inserted and made to assume undue importance. The B-text is most consistent with the Latin original (Skeat, Notes, 215; C, XVII., 201), and with

the present accepted interpretation of the terms used. To say that this is a list of the specific functions or faculties of the soul is comprehensible; to say that the soul is a faculty of the will, and that the will is a faculty of itself, is to us nonsense.

**Anima, or Life.** In this passage we should have a guide to the philosophical interpretation of several important characters. Anima is mentioned elsewhere (C, XI., 127 ff.) as dwelling in a castle made of the four elements, earth, air, wind and water; she is dear to Kynde (interpreted as Nature, God) and is like Him. For safety she is placed in this castle whose lord is Dowel; his daughter Dobet is her servant; above both, peer of a bishop, is Dobest, her teacher, Inwit (Conscience) is constable of that castle; and with him are the other wits, his five sons, Seewell, Saywell, Hearwell, Workwell, and Goodfaith Gowell;—not exactly the five senses, but a conception of Langland's own of the agencies most likely to repel Satan.

The list of mental faculties given above is taken from Isidore (Skeat, Notes, 215). Following another source of popular philosophy, Langland says that Inwit is in the head and Anima in the heart. This statement is derived from Galen (Skeat, Notes, 140), who divides the functions into the vital, essential to life, whose seat is the heart; animal, perceived and subject to the will, whose seat is the head; natural, not perceived, whose seat is the liver. We are somewhat at a loss to determine whether Langland regards Anima as the vital function simply, common to men and other animals; or whether it is with him the more exalted if indefinable conception called the soul. The first passage seems to subordinate it unduly; the second is indecisive until we are told that it is like Kynde. Since Kynde undoubtedly means God in this case, possibly we here touch the higher conception.

**Conscience.** If conscience is an animal function, subject to the will, we are likely to land in confusion; but probably in making its seat the head Langland did not intend to follow Galen any farther. Rather he views conscience as an intellectual faculty under Divine direction. He has drawn a broad line of demarcation between Anima and Conscience, whatever his reason may have been; and again it seems as though to him Anima could be little more than physical life.

The character of Conscience as a moral teacher is one of the most consistently treated in the poem. Conscience is of the counsel of Truth, and cannot be deceived. Holy Writ is his guide upon doubtful points, but he insists upon a true interpretation. He is guided by Reason (C, V., 5) but is free to enlighten Reason before the latter

gives his decision (C, V., 33). Their respective functions were seen at first to be those of counselor and magistrate, but eventually Reason is appointed chancellor, and Conscience royal justice (C, V, 185), thus assigning them the same functions, but giving Reason the higher station. Again Reason is a pope, and Conscience bearer of his crosier (C, VI., 113). Thus Conscience seems to be made subject to the Bible, the Church and Reason.

Throughout the rest of the poem, Conscience is the person who advises, guides and directs men, and leader of the forces of the Church. It is always therefore that enlightened intellectual faculty which judges and directs with regard to moral matters; appearing most often as the accuser and public prosecutor of Wrong.

**WIT.** We have next to distinguish Conscience or Inwit from Wit pure and simple. In Will's search for Dowel he follows a logically ascending scale of inquiry. First he meets Thought, and after receiving some information is directed to Wit; from Wit he passes to his wife, Study. Wit and Study should result in learning, and accordingly Study soon refers Langland to Clergy, whose wife, Scripture, (interpreted written knowledge) she has instructed (C, X and XII). Advancing in this line of intellectual development, Langland raises so many objections to some of the teachings received that he is finally accused of seeking knowledge only to cavil at it, and further knowledge is refused him. This is true in all the texts except A. In this (Passus XII) Scripture takes pity on Will, and directs him to her cousin, Kynde Wit; a proceeding that is apparently, in this sense, sending him back whence he started.

\* This sequence, with the exception of the fifth step of A, XII which may be simply an inadvertence, becomes reasonably clear when examined by the light of the later definition of faculties. In comparing texts B and C, Thought is identified with *Mens* (C, XVII, 185, B, XV, 25), and *Mens* was defined as the mind, the fundamental power which underlies all mental action. The only reference to Wit here given is in the definition of *Sensus* as "whenne ich fe that folke telleth" and "that is witte and wisdom the welle of all craftes." From this it appears that Wit means the mind as applied to the perception of truth, either mental or physical. Thought is the instrument, Wit its natural use. Wit applied to books becomes Study, the books are Scripture; the result of the application is Clergy.

What, then, is meant by Kynde Wit if it is not synonymous with Wit as already defined? The way to it is to be pointed out by the guide "Prove all things," until the seekers reach the burg, "Hold fast-that-which is good." This seems to be the road to natur

wisdom, or common sense, as distinguished from clergy; the wisdom of experience; and probably this is the answer to the question.

**Reason.** Reason is defined as the faculty which may "deme domes and do as treuthe techeth" and this is in general consistent with the character as introduced through the poem. It is a righteous judge which interprets and applies law, particularly the law of God. In this capacity is its first appearance at the trial of Meed, and Conscience is accuser, also according to the formal definition. Reason, the preacher (C, VI., 114), interprets the law with reference to the pestilences, and the duty of men in relation thereto.

There is temporary confusion between reason and instinct when Langland wonders why reason gives to animals more assistance than to men; as though he really believed that animals could ponder and decide. But in reproving Langland for his questions (C, XIV., 196) Reason appears as judge; and even his silent departure with Piers Plowman from the dinner of Clergy, Conscience and the Doctor (C, XVI., 151) may be interpreted as a decision.

In summary, mind is that which receives knowledge; wit the channel through which knowledge comes, conscience the perception of it as right or wrong, reason the judge of its actual value, study is a second means used to obtain it (the first is wit or natural observation or perception); nature is one source of information, scripture another; the result from the first source of information is Kynde Wit, from the second, clergy.

**Free Will.** The greatest difficulty lies in interpreting Langland's conception of Free Will in the relation implied between Free Will and the other faculties. In the C-text Free Will is made the fundamental power, of which all the other faculties are manifestations; while in the B-text, Anima is the fundamental, and Free Will is not mentioned at all until we come to the description of the tree of Charity, which grows in a garden, the heart, in man's body; and Free Will is the farmer of that garden under Piers Plowman. In each text Free Will is the defender of the fruit of the tree against the Fiend; but in the C-text he acts in addition for a long time as preacher, teacher and guide. It is perhaps consistent to make Free Will a guide; but as to the other attributes here ascribed, it seems that Langland must be enlarging a certain part of his definition (that which will or will not do good deeds or evil, or that which turns from evil to the good) so as to make it cover the whole field of Conscience and Reason. In doing this he has lost sight of the distinctive function of the will, that of choosing, perhaps because he thinks that a choice involves the exercise of reason, conscience and the other faculties. In short it appears that he has come to a false conclusion with regard to the

nature of the will; and that the power he ascribes to it should rather be ascribed to the soul, Anima; and we have here a further reason for supposing that with him the name Anima means simply will and action. This conception of Anima is consistent with so much of the Latin original as he gives in English; but in itself and in its relation to the will it is not consistent with the meaning of the passage as he gives it in Latin. I conclude that he may sometimes be at fault as to the meaning of terms, but that having taken his stand, whether upon a misconception or otherwise, he stands with reasonable firmness and is in general consistent with himself. And the clearest exposition of mental science in the fourteenth century was not likely to be particularly clear to one who approached the subject in a casual way, with the sole object of adding a new illustration to a popular treatment of an entirely different subject.

### The Form of the Poem.

**Visions.** It has been said that a park and a vision constitute the stock mechanism of the literary compositions of the fourteenth century. Langland's method differs from the conventional method in that it makes more of the vision and less of the park than is usual. The whole work is a series of visions, and the moments of waking are so few and unimportant as scarcely to be noticeable. When they are noticeable, they are often suggestive of the park, that is of the outer air, of the free life that the author must have lived at some early time; they breathe an atmosphere of the hills and woods, though even in this respect they produce an effect that is still conventional.

At other times the visions suggest what is not at all conventional; that the author's contemplative habits were productive of sluggishness. It seems strange that a person of his reverent habits should twice represent himself as going to sleep in church, unless such an occurrence was not altogether unknown in his actual experience; and he is reminded of Sloth who went to sleep during his own confession.

From another standpoint the structure of the poem as a series of visions is fortunate. Langland's work, regarded as a whole, lacks consistency, whether we take into account the central character or the minor ones, and even where he strove to secure consistency, we have seen that his success was not complete. But in a vision, entire consistency is not necessary; and in a series of them, the way is open for the author to follow his fancy whither he will, and to cast to the winds all the rules of unity and proportion and sequence, while

still have no difficulty in gathering the specific lessons which Langland teaches in specific places.

Through the whole composition it is evident that the poem was really a growth, not a structure; or if a structure, put together in a childlike way; and the efforts to reduce it to structural beauty and proportion, while partly successful, were an afterthought.

**Allegory.** After the visions the allegories are the most prominent features, and here again Langland is following the example of others. But Langland carries his personifications farther than any other has done, except Bunyan; while he deals largely with the abstract and the ideal, he loves to make it as concrete and as tangible as possible.

**Quotations.** There is really more of originality and more of the spirit of the coming Reformation in his liberal use of quotations. His purpose was twofold; to show that his own teaching was in no sense revolutionary, but in accordance with the standard of the church; and to make the teaching of the church plain to all. To this latter end he translated the passages used, interpreted, commented, or preached from them as texts, and in a homely fashion that the simplest could understand. And while he could not place the Bible itself in the hands of the people, he did what he could toward that end, and approved the efforts of those who aimed to do more. Looking at the quotations simply, we might regard the whole poem as a series of sermons bearing upon daily duty as the chief topic, and even the metrical form and the imagery were well adapted to make the sermons effective; probably more so than Langland knew when he began to write.

**Similes and Proverbs.** The poem abounds in similes, proverbs, parables and puns, of which a fairly complete list is given in the index to Professor Skeat's edition. From Langland we may learn the origin of many expressions that are current in popular speech, if not in literature; as for instance, the supposedly profane expression "not worth a curse," proves to be the eminently fit and sensible remark, "not worth a cress" (C, XII., 14). Others especially striking are, "to have pepper in the nose" (B, XV., 197) for, to be angry; "measuring the mist on Malvern Hills" (C, I., 163) as preferable to meeting an attorney without money in hand; the familiar and mysterious saying, "as dead as a doornail" (C, II., 184), and the negative and ironical expressions, "as courteous as a hound in a kitchen" (B, V., 261), "as becometh a cow to hop in a cage" (K, III., 262). These sayings and proverbs almost without exception wear the aspect of current coin of the realm, and add to the effectiveness of the pictures of common life.

**Parables.** Many of the parables are directly Scriptural. Others one of the most pleasing and instructive is that of the merchant and the messenger (C, XIV., 33) which is probably Langland's own and is no less significant literally than figuratively in regard to what may be called the laws of the road. Short but exceedingly happy is the friar's illustration of the wagging boat (C, XI., 32) by which it is conclusively shown how one may meet with many mishaps in religious life and yet be saved.

**Puns.** Plays upon words are not so numerous as might be expected. As good as any, though probably not original, are the comparison of *words* and *worts* (vegetables; B, V, 162), and that carried out at length (C, XVIII., 200) where the cross upon the reverse of the red noble is said to take the place of the cross of Christ in the worship of many.

The riddles, parables and puns illustrate rather Langland's close relation to the people than the peculiar character of his mind. When the thought is more elevated they are fewer, but they sometimes occur where Langland is pressing most earnestly forward; and in such places they are evidently spontaneous and unstudied. This can hardly be said of such efforts as that to illustrate the difference between reward and bribery by the relations of grammar.

**Structure of Allegory.** The general structure of the allegory is as follows. First we have a picture of the world, which is given over to the lust for money and to the seven deadly sins. Those who realize the condition of affairs and long for a better estate are misguided in their search for it by a humble plowman, until they learn that deliverance lies in Dowel. The author, as one of them, then begins a search for Dowel, Dobet and Dobest, as three stages of the way to holiness, and in the search meets various personages who question his motive, the road he is taking, his haste to reach the end of his journey. Each affords him all the help possible, but all are not in agreement. Finally attention is directed to Christ and His teaching as the culmination of Dowel, Dobet and Dobest. His crucifixion and resurrection are related; Conscience becomes the leader of His forces upon earth, and is sore besieged by Anti-Christ.

**Allegorical Names.** A minor point noticeable in Langland's method is the length of the names often bestowed upon persons and places. Piers Plowman's wife (C, X., 80) is "Work-when-time-is; her daughter, "Do-right-so-or-thy-dam-shall-thee-beat;" her son "Suffer-thy-sovereigns have their-will-, judge them-not-, for-if-thou do-thou-shalt-dearly-pay." In one instance (C, VII., 310) the name of a Welshman extends for several lines.

**Obscurities.** In its final form, the poem contains many obscurities due to various causes; some of them grammatical merely and due to carelessness or oversight. One passage seems faulty in every text (C, IV., 77-89, and parallels) because of the omission of the chief verb; but the fault in this case does not lead to obscurity. Lack of consistency in characterization is another source of difficulty; another seems due to sheer forgetfulness, as when the author goes to sleep on Malvern Hills and wakes up in London; in interpolating a passage he has neglected to ascertain what was the scene of the part into which it was interpolated. Lastly may be mentioned the riddles. What is intended as a puzzle may not be open to criticism because it is puzzling, but at least one of these is now inexplicable (B, XIII., 150-156; Skeat, Notes, 196) because of the impossibility of tracing the contemporary references. But Langland's puzzles and inconsistencies are not greater than those of Gower, who introduces into his work matters irrelevant or contradictory and illustrations that fit "as the fist does the eye" (Ten Brink, Eng. Lit., p. 135); and if Gower represents uninspired scholarship, Langland's humble inspiration without scholarship is preferable.

### The Spirit of the Poem.

**Influences Upon the Poem.** Langland is distinguished from his great contemporaries as being of the priesthood and people, but not of the court; and this might be inferred from his language. Latin is used freely, while French appears but seldom, and French influence is slight, appearing about equally in language and subject matter. The growing lack of appreciation of French and the French people among the lower classes is clearly reflected, although Langland probably did not share in it himself. With regard to his subject, there was no other than a religious one for Langland with his narrower horizon when even Gower and Chaucer with their wider range of thought were constrained to treat it: Chaucer lightly and satirically, a touch here and there, Gower with all the intensity of which he was capable in the "Vox Clamantis." For Langland living in the fourteenth century and close to the hearts of the people as well as to their unhappy lives there was but one voice, the same voice of one crying in the wilderness, uttered in the language of the people. How far-reaching were the results of this utterance we may only infer from the popular uprisings that accompanied and the Reformation that followed it, though both uprisings and Reformation were led by others. Its poetic form was that usually chosen by those who had a message for the people not to be delivered from the pulpit; the form

which would ensure its sinking deep and circulating widely. And even in returning toward the Old English standard in the structure of his verse, Langland was not merely rejecting the newer French fashions; he was appealing still more directly to the popular sympathy.

**Purpose.** Langland, having convictions, believed it his duty to teach them to the people, and deliberately chose means to this end. His sole reference to his authorship of poetry, his "makynge" (B, XII., 15-29), speaks of it as recreation, resorted to that he may be more perfect in his more serious duties; and he quotes to his questioner, in justification, the examples of holy men. But this is merely deprecation. It occurs in the B-text, which must have been written after a conviction fully formed that this was the serious work of his life; and the holy fathers referred to were not in the habit of wasting even their moments of recreation in work that had no serious purpose. Langland felt that he must speak; and his first utterance was dictated by the desire to speak to the people as they spoke to each other, or as they were addressed by those who showed most power to interest them; and with this restriction, the *Vision of Piers Plowman* was, in its earlier form, a spontaneous outpouring.

**Earnestness.** Of its earnestness and depth of feeling with, as well as for, those in bondage to sin, harsh laws and a corrupt clergy, there can be no doubt. Scarcely another quality could be so profusely illustrated as this. Langland has his lighter moments as we shall see, but through all his purpose is distinct, and though he may cause others to smile, the smile is never reflected upon his own face. Through his pages, as through the streets of London, he strides, turning not to give place to any, making obeisance to none, we may laugh or we may tremble at his words, but while we laugh or tremble, he has passed on about the business whereto his Master sent him.

**Insight.** His practical insight, as distinguished from his philosophical insight, was great. He sees the good about him as well as the evil, there are worthy as well as criminal poor, there are charitable bishops as well as avaricious ones. But the good needs not the same emphasizing as the bad, and does not receive it. The causes of evil as well as the evil itself are apparent to him, he finds them not only in high places, but among the people themselves; not king and church only are responsible for lack of bread, but often the careless improvidence of the breadwinners. And if he does not suggest cures for all that needs cure, he points out a better road, a road that has since been followed, the way of Holy Writ; and most of all, he avoids the way of communism and anarchy, even though many thought they read of it in his work and some therefore ventured to walk in it.

**The Prophecies.** As to his insight into the future a question may fairly be raised. He believed it impossible to forecast, and yet has sometimes used the style of prophecy, though whether in earnest or in satire it is not always easy to say. One such passage (C, IV., 440-485) is rather a picture of what Langland hopes for than a prediction that it will take place. The picture bears a general resemblance to the millennium, and to show that it is distant he says that all Jews and Saracens shall first be converted. Another passage of similar character describes the time when Wrong may be pardoned (C, V., 108). Another (C, IX., 348-355) Professor Skeat believes to be merely a satire upon mysterious forms of prophecy then in vogue; it refers to a time of famine and pestilence when Death shall withdraw and Dearth be justice and Dawe the ditcher shall die for default (of food) unless God of His goodness grant us a truce. It contains an inexplicable riddle and a reference to the malign aspect of Saturn, and is almost too astrological to be seriously spoken.

But there is no doubt as to the seriousness of a passage which contains no riddles nor astrology (C, VI., 169):—

And yet shall come a king and confess you all  
**And** beat you as the Bible telleth for breaking of your rule,  
**And** amend you, monks, nuns, and canons,  
**And** put you to your penance, *to return to your former state,\**  
**And** barons and their children blame you and reprove,  
*Some trust in chariots and some in horses. . . . They are brought down and fallen.*

**Friars** in their refectory shall find at that time  
**Bread** without begging to live by ever after,  
**And** Constantine shall be their cook and coverer of their church:  
**For** the Abbot of England, and the abbess his niece  
**Shall** have a knock on their crowns, and incurable the wound:  
*The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers . . . with a continual stroke,*  
**But** before that king shall come as chronicles tell,  
**Clerks** and holy church shall be clothed new.

Here, though Langland may show no prophetic insight, simply enunciating, as Professor Skeat says, an opinion generally current with reference to the power of the king, the expression must remain noteworthy, both for its power and dignity and for the manner in which it was fulfilled in the time of Henry VIII.

**Independence and Courage.** Langland's independence of opinion and judgment is attested in every line of his work. As to the proclaiming of his convictions, which must often have had to do with individuals as well as doctrines, his practice varies. Sometimes he hesitates to push his teaching to its logical conclusion, exclaiming that

\* *Italicised passages are in Latin in original*

he dares not (B, pr., 209), or that he that speaks most truly is soonest blamed; while again he challenges the acts of the bishop of Syria who looks like a real individual (C, XVIII., 278), impeaches the king himself (C, IV., 210), and fears not the death at the stake (B, XV., 81).

**Conservatism.** But the key to it all lies in his conservatism. It is not that he ever fears to speak because of any personal danger that may come to him; for religious persecution had not yet become severe, and he is most daring with regard to political matters where perhaps the danger of free speech was greatest, at least to those outside of the church. He hesitates to speak because he does not wish to disturb the established order, political or religious, but only to eradicate the abuses that have crept in, and if he should say all that he might, he might incite men to deeds that he does not approve, and be held responsible for a meaning and for results that he does not intend.

**Imaginative-ness and Originality.** His imaginative faculty is fanciful rather than inventive, and is not strongly developed even in that direction. He sees facts and can depict them; he can reproduce pictures that others have painted, with slight variations of detail that serve to simplify rather than to elaborate, but in the domain of actual invention he is not at home. In his passages pertaining to Heaven and Hell, he leaves no actual picture in our minds, but simply enumerates the matters he wishes to bring before us. But in approaching nearer to things terrestrial the play of his fancy becomes greater and his work correspondingly more artistic.

Accordingly, his originality consists chiefly in the independence of view already mentioned, and in the vividness and power with which he treats of familiar matters, particularly those derived from his own experience. As to the actual subject matter, apart from his method of treatment, there is little or nothing not directly traceable to some outside source, except these facts of experience; and even his method is often borrowed. It is because of this that we learn that he had read some books, and seen some things that he never mentions directly. This is of course practically restating that his work shows fancy rather than imagination. The character called Imaginative shows less of imaginativeness than any other if that be possible, it is purely didactic; while many others are introduced with personal description.

**Attitude toward Women.** Langland's allusions to women are in proportion few, whether allegorical or real. The Lady Meed is first and most conspicuous; the female penitent representing Pride, Study, Scripture, Holy Church, Anima, and some minor characters practically complete the list. To these may be added a few references to his own wife and daughter, and to the women of London. His attitude toward the least of them is respectful; and in what he

says of Study and of his own wife he gives rise to the suspicion that in their presence he was humble as well as respectful. His feminine characters are no more puppets than are his masculine ones; he endows them with characteristics equally positive, we may say equally masculine; and from the lack of femininity we might infer either that Langland knew little of women, or that those he knew best were of an exceedingly positive type. In the familiar yet respectful leavetaking between Will and Scripture (A, XII., 38-48) we doubtless have the custom of the time.

**Wit, Satire, Humor.** The satire in Langland's work constitutes one of its strongest and most entertaining characteristics, naturally most often manifested in the attacks upon wrong, but in all its intensity never anything but kindly and wholesome. Usually the subject is treated in a manner too incisive to be called humorous, though always witty if we make the formal distinction (See Hunt, *Eth. Teachings in O. E. Lit.*, p. 248); but the sense of humor is often present and sometimes becomes so prominent that the reader must smile, though he may never suspect the author of smiling. Of such a character is Meed's half-text (C, IV., 489) to which Conscience supplies the important remainder giving the true meaning; Avarice's interpretation of restitution to mean robbery (C, VIII., 234-238); the friar's ready claim that Dowel dwells with "ous freres" (C, XI., 18), and the knight's assistance of Piers against Wastour, which was so exceedingly "courteous as his kind would" as to be entirely ineffectual. Many descriptive passages are characterized by a sustained humor throughout, as the description of Sloth and Glutton, and the account of the doctor at dinner (C, XVI).

**Descriptive Power.** The portion of the poem which is most often referred to, the description of the field full of folk, is not so good from an artistic standpoint as many others; it is more interesting as illustrating the character of Langland's imagination and giving a hint at what the completed poem is to be. It is a catalogue rather than a picture; yet the field and the tower and the deep dale are so clearly defined that our imagination completes what Langland left unfinished; and the highest art could do no more. The proposed marriage and the trial of Lady Meed which follow are again less remarkable for accuracy than for force; the force due to earnestness of intention, and what may be termed massiveness of presentation, and the effect heightened by the striking transition from country to city.

But when we reach the confessions of the seven deadly sins, Langland's work cannot be surpassed for wit and for close accuracy of portraiture. The scenes already mentioned may have been founded

on events that came under Langland's observation but infrequently; a miracle play, a wedding on some country estate, a trial at Westminster; but now we are dealing with matters that touch his daily experience.

Only quotation can do justice to the personal descriptions here given; as for example that of Avarice, with his beetle-brows, thick lips, flabby cheeks, half-shaven chin, head twice covered with hood and with hat, and garment so threadbare as to be an unsafe promenade for insects. The account of the means by which Avarice made his money follows, and is so circumstantial as to prove beyond a doubt that Langland was speaking whereof he knew; and the length with which he dwells upon this topic shows it to be a favorite one.

The best character sketch of the entire poem is that which follows, the description of Glutton (C, VII, 350) at the tavern. Glutton may not be in his own person so much of a wit as the Sir John Falstaff to whom Professor Skeat compares him, but he shows many similar characteristics, and will serve well as the literary predecessor of Sir John. The glutton of Shakespeare's day was undoubtedly a more intellectual animal than the glutton of Langland's time. The account of the game of barter at the tavern (the Freimarkt), the subsequent fate of Glutton, and his tardy repentance give a most graphic and amusing picture of the common life of common people on its lighter side.

Of a different character, but still witty and diverting, is the account of Piers Plowman in the field and his efforts to make some use of several of the repentant sinners, who prove to be obstinate and unmanageable. Yet the author never relaxes for a moment, nor does he allow his reader to forget the terrible earnestness that underlies it all, and not the least charm of his wit and satire is its apparent unconsciousness.

We come to a picture of the darker side (C. X., 71), of the sufferings of the very poor, spoken no longer in satire but in the keenest pity, the pity of one who had perhaps himself known what it was to lack food and fire and covering. —

Ruth is to read, or in ryme shew  
The woe of these women that dwell in cots,  
And of many other men that much woe suffer,  
Both a-hungred and a thirst, yet turn the fair outward  
And are abashed to beg.

Moving as it is, we feel grateful to Langland for giving as an obverse to the tales of tricksters and cheats this picture of poverty, abject, but honest and self-respecting.

The account of the dress and habits of Haukyn is less striking than those mentioned, chiefly because of the more free introduction of

**allegorical teaching.** From this point on, the religious teaching becomes more and more prominent, and the descriptions carry with them a greater weight of meaning and become in this sense more impressive. Langland is not a Milton, yet he can rise to a certain simple sublimity of his own that is suggestive of Bunyan, if not of Milton. There is much in the mechanism of the poem that suggests Bunyan; as the account of the castle of Anima, and the adventures on the way to Kynd Wit (A, XII., 56). The author's dramatic power is shown in the account of the dinner of Conscience, Clergy and the Doctor with Reason; even the Latin is not without its effect here, though the appearance of Piers Plowman is forced and unnecessary. Of the remaining portions, the most noteworthy from our present point of view are the account of the crucifixion (C, XX), the conquering of Hell (C, XXI), the building of Piers' barn (C, XXII), and in fact the whole of the last passus, which shows more of originality if not more of power than the account of the harrowing of hell.

In summary Langland's descriptive power is noticeable, as might be expected, in those things with which he was most familiar,—**scenes** of common life in city or country, and the things in which he **was** most deeply interested,—the passion and mission of Christ. Of **actual** invention there is little; and his power, while unquestionable, **is not** due to any attempt at art, but is incident to the directness and **earnestness** of his purpose. As examples of his most artistic work at **its two** extremes, I prefer the description of Glutton and that of the **siege** of Holy Church in the last passus, because in both the author **himself** is distinctly present, and the two most opposite sides of his **character** are clearly revealed: his brightest humor and his deepest **sadness**.

**Scholarship.** Touching the question of Langland's education and **scholarship** (See p. 234, and Ten Brink, *Early Eng. Lit.*, p. 352) the **list** of Langland's positive attainments includes, besides English **Grammar** and English Law, Latin, and something of French; but **nothing** at all of Greek. He had access to a few books only, and **beyond** that source his knowledge was for the most part that which **was** common property among thinking men.

I find the total number of distinct quotations in the poem to be about 475. Of these, 368 are directly from the Vulgate, and 29 more are probably from the same source, but are inexactly given. Of the remaining 75, 11 are from the services of the church, 5 from **Latin** hymns, 5 from the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus de Voragine, 18 from the church fathers, Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory, and other **church** writers; 9 from the *Disticha de Moribus ad Filium* of Dion-

ysius Cato, 3 from the *Historia Scholastica* of Peter Comestor, 2 and perhaps more from the *Compendium* of Peter Cantor; and one each from Boethius, Vincent of Beauvais, Juvenal, and others; besides several which Professor Skeat has been unable to trace, three or four of them in French in leonine verse, perhaps of Langland's composition. In addition there are a very large number of general allusions to these and other literary sources (See *Piers Plowman*, E. E. T. S. edition, Vol. IV., Section I., p. 512). Many of Langland's direct references to authorities are inexact, and he often gives the sense of authors quoted rather than their exact words, showing that reference to originals was not always easy; while the fewness of the errors in the references to the Vulgate speaks well for the power of his memory. It is probable that the list given comprises more works than were actually in Langland's reach, and that he knew most of the authors he cites from some collection of extracts. Especially do his references to the classics wear an aspect of being second hand.

Besides the few bits of French verse which may have been composed by Langland himself, there are several allusions and several resemblances of structure or action which suggest a knowledge of French works; especially Grosteste's "*Chastel d'Amour*," which may have been read in English translation, Huon de Meri's "*Torneiment de l'Antichrist*," and Rutebuef's "*La Voie de Paradis*." Further, in many instances the scene and action of the poem show conclusively that Langland was familiar with the stage representations of religious mysteries.

His references to Greek authors are undoubtedly conventional second hand (Plato, C. XII., 304, Aristotle, C, XV., 184). He mistranslates the name of Christ (C, XXII., 15), again misled by convention, and there was noticed an instance of departure from the exact meaning of a Latin original (Page 272). Occasionally he seems to have turned an ordinary saying into Latin on his own account, as if to give it greater weight.

From the preceding it seems that we may draw one new conclusion; that if these references and citations indicate the full scope of Langland's reading and literary training, his poetic faculty must certainly have been an inborn one. It is of course probable that he was familiar with English poetical versions of the legends and stories of which he makes continual use, as well as with popular versions of parts of the Scripture narrative, such as the *Cursor Mundi*, and the *Miracle Plays*. But the fact that he does not quote from these would indicate that he has received from them no distinct impression of poetical form, while the character of his versification and imagery and his return to alliteration furnish stronger evidence toward the

same point. The church fathers could never have made Langland a poet; but a reflective habit and a sympathetic and earnest disposition aided by a ready ear, a quick wit, a retentive memory, and the study of men as well as of books, could and did.

His legal learning was extensive, appearing in the form of copious allusions to facts of law so exact as to indicate more than common familiarity. Many of these are of a character to be picked up easily by attendance at courts; others, such as the knowledge of legal forms, imply some study and practice. Perhaps he was more than a looker on at Westminster; at least he must have attended there, probably for the purpose of acquiring knowledge that would be of practical use outside, as well as a knowledge of human nature; and had any occupation offered itself there, he would doubtless have seized upon it and turned it to good account.

As to the source of Langland's literary and religious training, I find that in my own mind, in the light of the preceding investigation, opinion has deepened into positiveness that he never saw the inside of university walls, scarcely even as a casual visitor. The list just given of his positive attainments would not of itself afford satisfactory evidence on either side; what he knew he might have learned within a university, though a student as earnest and conscientious as Langland should it seems have learned more and learned it more systematically. And even if university training was not so systematic in Langland's time as it has since become, there is still nothing in Langland's stock of knowledge which he could not have gained in the ordinary monastic schools and from contact with men.

But the strongest argument is that there is nowhere in either text the slightest reference to any university, or the slightest reflection of university life. The scene of the poem taken as a whole does reflect, unless with this exception, all the life that Langland had presumably lived; there are the fields and hills and streams of his boyhood days, and there are the crowded streets and questionable tavern society of London, the greedy crowd of the law court, and the reverent throng at the church. There is ample support for the common theory as to Langland's connection with the church and his position in it. If therefore we find all this reflected even to detail, and know that to Langland the place of study was a heaven upon earth, I cannot escape the conclusion that even a brief experience of university life would have so impressed itself upon his mind that we should have evidence of it again and again. Not finding this evidence I conclude that Langland's education, after a comparatively early age, was due to his own unaided efforts. A self taught man might easily feel the pride in a little knowledge of grammar and of French that he allows

himself to show; yet a diligent man among such associations might learn all that he knew. That he did develop himself so fully despite of difficulties, causes us to honor yet more highly the student who was greater than any learned doctor of his time, save alone.

### The Value of the Poem.

**Past influence, and present estimate.**

The influence of the Vision concerning Piers Plowman in helping to bring about a political upheaval that pointed the way to a religious revolution historical and needs no restatement. Wyclif quoted from Langland and both Langland and Wyclif were misinterpreted by many wise-headed ones whose efforts to hasten the coming of Langland's millennium, when "shall neither king nor knight, constable nor merchant, overburden the commons," materially retarded its advance. Thus the greatest immediate influence of the work was in a direction that its author neither contemplated nor desired; but though centuries were needed for the accomplishment of its true purpose and that accomplishment involved more than the dreamer dreamed, we may say that Piers Plowman did return to Holy Church and that the work of Langland was the first step toward his returning.

To us the work is of immeasurable value as a storehouse of information; and the feeling of each student of it must be that a lifetime scarcely sufficient for the full interpretation of a work upon the text of which one scholar has already expended half a lifetime.

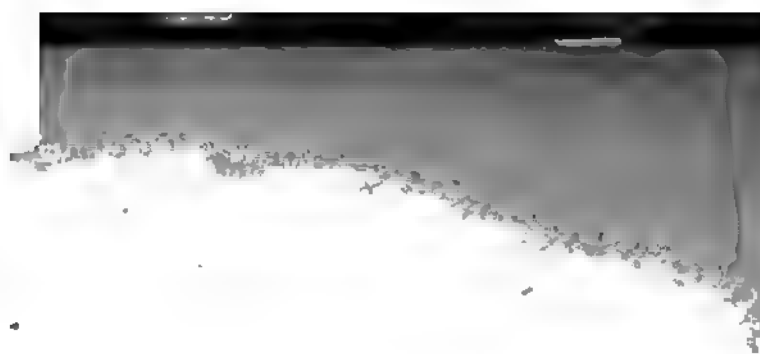






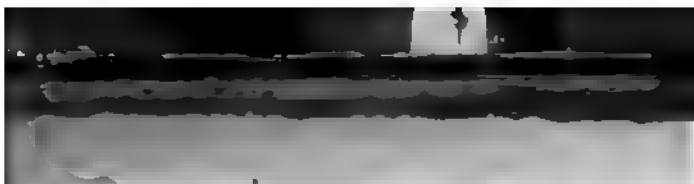


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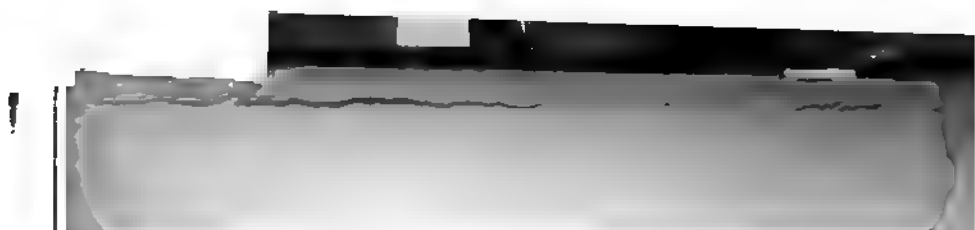








Rowe





Herrn Wimmer  
mit ergebenem Grusse

18. 10. 1898

# DIE GÖTTLICHE ROWE

Kap.

— — — — —

VON

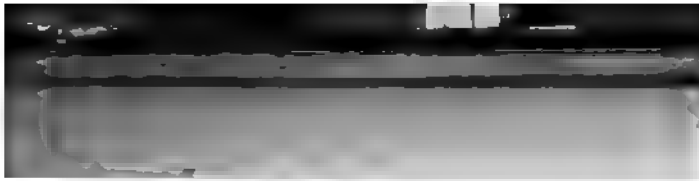
THEODOR VETTER

— — — — —

LEIPZIG  
VERLAG VON C. F. W. VEBER







—

②

# DIE GÖTTLICHE ROWE

—

VON

THEODOR VETTER

—

ZÜRICH

DRUCK VON FRIEDRICH SCHLÖSSER

1894

I

—

1870  
June

## „Die göttliche Rowe“.

Von Theodor Vetter.

Von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die jüngste Gegenwart haben auf englischem Boden neben den kräftigen Tönen männlicher, heldenhafter Dichtung auch die milden, selmsüchtigen Klänge weiblicher Poesie einen wohlwollenden, dankbaren Hörerkreis gefunden. Gleichgiltig ist, ob Frauen wirklich selbst das Wort ergriffen, oder ob Männer ihnen die schönen Gedanken und Verse in den Mund gelegt haben: willkommen war offenbar stets der Ausdruck weiblichen Empfindens. Von dem rührenden Jammer des Weibes, das — in einem der ältesten Rätsel — den abwesenden geliebten „Wolf“ zurückwünscht, und der Klage der Frau, die von Selmsucht und Trauer um den teuern Gatten, von dem Verbannung sie getrennt hat, verzehrt wird, bis auf die wortreicheren Ergüsse einer Felicia Hemans oder die tief-sinnigen Betrachtungen einer Elizabeth Barrett Browning erstreckt sich in England das Interesse an „weiblicher“ Poesie. Und mag auch die Überproduktion moderner Romanschriftstellerinnen die literarische Tätigkeit der Damen vorübergehend in Misskredit bringen, so ist nicht zu befürchten, dass echte Poesie auch aus weiblichem Munde nicht immer wieder auf die beste Aufnahme rechnen dürfe.

Die Regierungszeit der letzten Stuarts und der ersten Hannoveraner war im allgemeinen für die Anerkennung weiblichen Talentes nicht die günstigste Periode. Anschriftstellernden Frauen fehlte es allerdings nicht, zumal auf dem Gebiete des Dramas machten sie gewaltige Anstrengungen; aber ihre Werke waren so sehr von der leichten Moral der Zeit durchdrungen, dass es durchaus begreiflich erscheint, wenn die hervorragendsten Geister gegen solche Tätigkeit sich ablehnend verhielten, wendet sich doch selbst der Literaturhistoriker der Gegenwart mit Widerwillen von den Produkten einer Mrs Aphra Behn (1642–1689) oder einer Frau Mauley († 1724) ab. Um so wohlthuernder ist es gerade unter solchen Verhältnissen einer Schriftstellerin zu ge-

gegenen, deren Gesinnung uns heute noch Hochachtung einflösst, selbst wenn wir ihre Denkungsart nicht zu teilen vermögen; deren poetisches Können wir eingestehen müssen, auch wenn uns dasselbe wenig zu begeistern im stande sein wird.

Elizabeth Rowe, geborne Singer, hat nicht nach dem Ruhme des Dichternamens gestrebt, hat nicht durch die sonst damals übliche Widmung ihrer Schriften an hochgestellte Personen die Aufmerksamkeit auf sich zu ziehen versucht, hat sich nicht bemüht, mit den literarischen Grössen ihrer Zeit in Verbindung zu kommen. Ihre Dichtungen sind der anspruchslose Ausdruck eines einfachen, frommen Herzens, nicht berechnet zu glänzen vor der Welt, sondern nur veröffentlicht, um Gesinnungs-  
genossen zu gewinnen. Wenig Beachtung scheint ihnen in weiteren Kreisen Englands zu teil geworden zu sein; selten nur findet man den Namen der Dichterin bei ihren Zeitgenossen genannt.<sup>1</sup> Vergeblich sucht man heute in einem Dutzend moderner Literaturgeschichten nach genaueren Angaben über Elizabeth Rowe. Doch was die Heimat versagte, gewährte das Ausland. Frankreich schätzte die Werke der Elizabeth Rowe<sup>2</sup>; Deutschland besass schon 1745 eine Übersetzung ihrer Dichtungen; Ewald Christ. von Kleist war mit denselben vertraut, Klopstocks Gemahlin Margaretha ahmte die Engländerin nach, Klopstock selber nennt ausser Milton wohl keinen englischen Dichter so oft und so geistert wie die „göttliche Rowe“, „die himmlische, die fromme Singer“, und ihr verdankte er reiche Anregung; ja auch Wieland lebte während seiner ersten Dichtertätigkeit ganz in dem Zauber, mit dem ihre Werke ihn gefangen hatten. Nur in wenigen Worten pflegen die Untersuchungen über die eben

<sup>1</sup> Auf die von Elwin in seiner Ausgabe von Pope's Works, London 1847 Vol. II p. 243 und 246 hervorgehobenen scheinbaren Entlehnungen ist nicht viel zu geben. Elizabeth Rowe schreibt 1715 in dem Gedichte auf den Tod ihres Gatten: „A dying lover pale and gasping lies“; Pope 1717 in „Eloise to Abelard“ Vers 100: „A naked lover bound and bleeding lies“. — Ferner Frau Rowe in der Dichtung „On the Creation“: „And kindling glories bright all the skies“; Pope in der genannten Dichtung Vers 146: „And gleams glory brightened all the day“.

<sup>2</sup> L'amitié après la mort etc. par Madame Rowe. Trad. de l'Anglois sur la cinquième édition. Genève 1753. 2 vols. Die französische Übersetzung erschien zum erstenmale in Amsterdam 1740 in 2 Bänden. Die mir vorliegende Ausgabe ist ein Nachdruck.

namten deutschen Dichter des englischen Vorbildes zu gedenken: um das, was Elizabeth Rowe geleistet, scheint sich niemand mehr zu kümmern: so möge denn das Gedächtnis der edelgesinnten Dichterin wenigstens um der Wirkung willen, die sie auf einen bestimmten Kreis der deutschen Poesie ausgeübt, in Kürze wieder erneuert werden.

Bekanntlich hatte England neunzig Jahre nach Frankreich auch seine St. Barthélemy. War dieselbe auch weniger blutig als die Schreckensnacht von Paris, so war sie in ihren Folgen doch kaum von geringerer Tragweite. Der Kontinent hat den Kampf der Reformation in heftigen Zusammenstößen durchgemacht: das britische Reich wurde immer und immer wieder von Krämpfen durchzuckt, die seinem religiösen Leben schliesslich eine Richtung gaben, um die es kaum ein Land beneiden dürfte. Katholizismus und Protestantismus haben selbst in ihrer starrsten Form etwas Einheitlicheres, Befriedigenderes an sich als die Kirche Englands mit ihrer Halbheit; durch die Bestimmtheit ihrer Lehre führen sie weit sicherer zu einer wahrhaft freien Geistesentwicklung, als ein kirchliches System, das von Anfang an sich zersplittert hat, so dass verhältnismässig kleine Gruppen nun ängstlich an ihren Formeln und Doktrinen festhalten und — wenn sie überhaupt etwas Neues hervorbringen — nur ungesundes Sektenwesen zu zeugen im stande sind. Eine jener unglückseligen Zuckungen war der sog. St. Bartholomew's Day von 1662. Auf diesen Tag hatten alle diejenigen Geistlichen, die sich den Satzungen der Staatskirche nicht unterwerfen wollten, ihre Stellen zu verlassen. Damit schnitt die Letztere das Band entzwei, das sie bisher noch mit der reformatorischen Bewegung verknüpft hatte. Wohl schlossen sich die Anhänger aller nicht staatskirchlichen Richtungen nun als Nonconformisten fester zusammen, doch fehlte ihnen der günstige Grund und Boden zu gesunder Entwicklung. Karl II. strebte allerdings darnach, das Los der Dissenters zu erleichtern nicht um ihrer willen, sondern um den Katholiken Vorteile zu verschaffen —, aber das Parlament trat dem Könige schon entgegen: die Verfolgung nahm ihren ungehinderten Lauf, bis die Söhne des enthaupteten Königs vom Schauplatze abgetreten waren und ein milderer Regiment allmählig zu allgemeiner Duldung hinüberleitete.

[illegible]

38. Kapitels des Buches Hiob in fünffüssigen Jamben gibt davon Zeugnis.<sup>2</sup> Gewissenhaft trieb sie auch das Studium des Französischen und Italienischen; Henry Thynne, der gelehrte Sohn des Viscount Weymouth unterrichtete sie in diesen Sprachen. Nach wenigen Monaten schon war sie im stande Tasso zu lesen und später fand sie grossen Genuss darin, Stücke aus dem befreiten Jerusalem ins Englische zu übertragen.<sup>3</sup>

An Verehrern fehlte es der anmutigen Dichterin nicht; doch schien irdische Liebe sie nicht fesseln zu können, nur reine Freundschaft war ihr Ziel:

„A stranger to the loose delights of love,  
My thoughts the nobler warmth of friendship prove“

singt sie als Sylvia in dem Schäfergedichte „Liebe und Freundschaft“.<sup>4</sup> Unter denjenigen, die sich ihr näherten, war auch der Dichter Matthew Prior. Vergeblich warb er um die Liebe der Unerbittlichen.<sup>5</sup> Erst im 35. Lebensjahre traf Elizabeth Singer mit demjenigen zusammen, dem sie die Hand zum Ehebunde zu reichen sich entschliessen konnte. Sie lebte damals in der Nähe von Bath, als der erst 22jährige Thomas Rowe zu einem Aufenthalte nach dem berühmten Badeorte kam und in ihren Gesellschaftskreis eingeführt wurde. Als Bewunderer ihrer Dichtungen hatte er sich ihr genähert, als erklärter Liebhaber nahm er von ihr Abschied. Der jugendliche Rowe war der Geliebten würdig. Nach einer tüchtigen Erziehung zu Hause hatte er sich zum Zwecke juristischer Studien nach Leyden begeben und von dort nicht nur eine gründliche Kenntniss der alten Klassiker, sondern auch eine bleibende Begeisterung für die freiheitlichen Einrichtungen der Niederlande mit nach Hause gebracht. Mit seiner Gelehrsamkeit verband er eine seltene Gewandtheit in Rede und Schrift und ein aussergewöhnliches Gedächtnis. Gerne beschäftigte er sich mit Geschichte und fasste schon früh den Plan, die Biographien aller derjenigen berühmten Männer des Altertums zu

<sup>2</sup> The Works of Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe, London 1796. III, 75.

<sup>3</sup> Aus Buch IV, VII, XIII und XVI (Works, Vol. III p. 8, 29, 156 und 162, 23).

<sup>4</sup> Works III, 17.

<sup>5</sup> Prior, Poems on several occasions. Glasgow 1751. I. 49, wo auch das Schäfergedicht der Elizabeth Singer sich findet.

schreiben, welche Plutarch in seinem Werke übergangen hat. Doch sind erst nach Rowe's Tode acht solcher Biographien in Drucke erschienen, während ein Leben des Thrasybul in den Händen Richard Steele's verloren ging, der es zur Durchsicht erhalten hatte. Aber die Angehörigen und Freunde des Verfassers hatten die Genugthuung, dass die acht Stücke 1734 ins Französische übersetzt und mit einer anerkennenden Einleitung versehen in die Übersetzung des Plutarch beigelegt wurden.

Nicht ohne Grund hat ein poetischer Freund Thomas Rowe dessen Verbindung mit Elizabeth Singer in lateinischen Versen dem Bunde verglichen, der die berühmte Homerübersetzerin Anne Lefèvre mit dem gelehrten André Dacier vereinigte: jedoch war dem englischen Schriftstellerpaare kein jahrzehntelange fruchtbares Zusammenwirken, sondern nur eine fünfjährige — allerdings sehr glückliche — Ehe beschieden. Schon im März 1715 starb Rowe infolge einer langwierigen Lungenkrankheit. In einer Elegie beklagt die bedauernswerte Witwe den Tod des geliebten „Alexis“,<sup>7</sup> und nochmals erneut sich ihr Jammer, als der Jahrestag des Scheidens wiederkehrt:

While my Alexis withers in the tomb,  
Untimely cropt, not sees a second bloom,  
The fairest season of the changing year,  
A wild and wintry aspect seems to wear;  
The flow'rs no more their former beauty boast,  
Their painted hue, and fragrant scents are lost.  
The joyous birds their harmony prolong,  
But, oh! I find no music in their song! <sup>6</sup>

Die 22 Jahre, die Elizabeth Rowe noch beschieden waren, verbrachte sie in stiller Zurückgezogenheit. Mit ihrem Gatten hatte sie in der Nähe von London gelebt, jetzt begab sie sich wieder nach Somersetshire und schlug ihren Wohnsitz in Frome auf, wo ihr Gut lag. Nur vorübergehend liess sie sich bewegen, bei Freundinnen längere Besuche zu machen; ihre Zeit gehörte ganz dem Wohltun und der Schriftstellerei. Hier entstanden die Werke, welche den Namen der Elizabeth Rowe über die Grenzen Englands hinaustrugen: Die Freundschaft im Tode, in

<sup>6</sup> Works IV, 319.

<sup>7</sup> Works III, 122.

<sup>8</sup> Works III, 126.

**zwanzig Briefen von Toten an Lebende** (1728), und die **Moralischen und unterhaltenden Briefe**, in Prosa und Versen (I. Teil 1729, II. Teil 1731, III. Teil 1733). Schon in früheren Jahren hatte sie ein Epos „Joseph“ in acht Büchern gedichtet, die Erzählung schloss mit der Verheiratung Josephs. Durch eine Freundin liess sie sich bewegen, zwei Bücher hinzuzufügen und die ganze Dichtung zu veröffentlichen (1736). Das war ihr letztes Auftreten. Erst später erschienen auch noch die „Geistlichen Übungen“ (Devout Exercises), die aus verschiedenen Zeitabschnitten ihres Lebens zu stammen scheinen. Am 20. Februar 1737 schied die Dichterin aus dem Leben mit der festen Überzeugung, nun zu der Herrlichkeit einzugehen, mit der sich ihr Geist so oft und so gerne beschäftigt hatte. Ein halbes Dutzend umfangreicher Elegien folgten ihrem Tode; sie wurde als der Ruhm ihres Geschlechtes und ihres Zeitalters gepriesen:

Thou glory of thy sex and age, farewell!  
Thy various virtues future bards shall tell;  
Men yet unborn thy mem'ry shall revere,  
And wet thy marble with a pious tear, etc.\*

Unsterblichkeit wurde ihr prophezeit — und heute ist Elizabeth Rowe in England so gründlich vergessen, dass selbst die umfangreichsten Nachschlagewerke für ihren Namen keinen Raum erübrigen können.<sup>10</sup>

Und begehen die englischen Literaturhistoriker ein so grosses Unrecht, wenn sie Elizabeth Rowe in ihren Darstellungen nicht berücksichtigen?

Die kürzeren Werke der Dichterin sind zusammengefasst unter dem Titel: „Poems on several occasions.“<sup>11</sup> Legen wir die ziemlich zahlreichen Übersetzungen und Paraphrasen aus Tasso, aus Guarini's Pastor fido, aus den Psalmen und dem alten Testament im allgemeinen beiseite, so überrascht uns in den selbständigen Dichtungen vor allem die Ähnlichkeit mit Milton. Nicht der Stoff allein ist — die Schöpfung,<sup>12</sup> eine Beschreibung der Hölle,<sup>13</sup> — der an das Verlorene Paradies an-

\* Works IV, 383

<sup>10</sup> Die Encyclopaedia Britannica erwähnt Elizabeth Rowe nicht.

<sup>11</sup> Eine Überschrift, wie wir sie auch bei Prior, Addison, Gray, Macaulay, etc. etc.

<sup>12</sup> Works III, 13

<sup>13</sup> Works III, 63.

Am jüngstlichen hat sich Elizabeth Rowe in ihrem schon oben genannten Epos „Joseph“ an Milton angeschlossen. Nach altbengelächter Sitte — doch bei ihr ist eben weder an Homer noch an Vergil, sondern an den Dichter des Verlorenen Paradieses zu denken — eröffnet sie das erste Buch mit einer Anrufung des Musen:

1.  $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{A})$  is a  $\mathcal{A}$ -bimodule.

[illegible]

**Buch.** Das Verbrechen wird begangen, die Rache folgt auf dem Fusse: aber die Beleidigten unterliegen nicht: sie freuen sich ihres Sieges und der Schilderung der Heldentaten ihrer Vorfahren.

Wiederholt wird man an das sechste Buch des Verlorenen Paradieses erinnert, jedoch zum grossen Nachtheile der Sängerin. Sie hat die Schrecken des Bürgerkrieges nicht miterlebt, sie hat den Siegesruf von Cromwell's begeisterten Scharen nicht vernommen. -- Nun versuchen die Geister der Finsternis auf andere Weise Zwietracht zu säen, unter Jakobs Kindern erhebt sich Streit. Die ganze Geschichte Josephs und seiner Brüder<sup>16</sup> wird erzählt, mit besonderer Ausführlichkeit sein Verhältnis zu Sabrina, dem Weibe Potiphars. Eine abgeschlossene Episode bildet Buch V, in welchem die Zofe der Sabrina, um ihre Herrin zu unterhalten, die Sage von Ninus und Semiramis einflicht: worauf die Dichterin wieder zur biblischen Überlieferung zurückkehrt. Während Joseph im Gefängnisse Wunder verrichtet und sich die Liebe Aller erwirbt, wird Sabrina von schweren Gewissensqualen heimgesucht und bekennt sterbend ihre Schuld:

If there are gods that human things regard,  
My monstrous crimes will meet a just reward.  
Oh sacred virtue! at thine awful name  
I start, and all my former thoughts disclaim:  
For thou art no fantastic empty thing,  
From thee alone unmingled pleasures spring.

Nach ihrem Tode wird dem unschuldig Gefangenen die höchste Ehre erwiesen und Pharao will ihm seine Tochter zum Weibe geben<sup>17</sup>, er aber heiratet die schöne, der Isis geweihte Priesters-tochter Asenath.

Hier endete in erster Fassung das Gedicht. Zweitellos ist in der Geschichte Josephs die Versöhnung mit seinen Brüdern ein sehr ansprechender Abschnitt: aber die Kürze, mit welcher Frau Rowe in ihren alten Tagen die Erzählung zu Ende führte (Buch IX und X) -- es soll die Arbeit weniger Tage sein -- war für die Dichtung wie für den Ruhm der Dichterin kaum ein Gewinn. In den früheren Gesängen hatte sie neuer, ergrei-

<sup>16</sup> Nach 1. Mos. 37, 39 u. f.

<sup>17</sup> Abweichend von 1. Mos. 41, 1.

<sup>18</sup> siehe Works IV, p. 323.

artige Züge mit Geschick in die bekannte Handlung verwoben, hier ist im Gegenteil manches weggelassen. Das Gedicht schliesst mit Jakobs Ausruf:

My Joseph lives! transporting truth, he cries,  
I'll see his face and close my aged eyes:  
Content, resign these poor remains of breath,  
And gently rest in the calm shades of death.

Jene ergreifende Scene des Wiedersehens zwischen Vater und Sohn<sup>19</sup> hat keine Stelle mehr gefunden.

Bei dem (gleich zu erwähnenden) Anklang, den die Werke der Elizabeth Rowe auf deutschem Boden gefunden, liegt die Vermutung sehr nahe, es möchten auch die zahlreichen Joseph-Dichtungen der Fünfzigerjahre des 18. Jahrhunderts in Beziehung zu der englischen Dichtung stehen.<sup>20</sup> Das dürfte sich indessen m. E. kaum nachweisen lassen. Weder Bodmers Jakob und Joseph (Zürich 1751), noch dessen Dina und Schem (Trosberg d. h. Zürich 1753), noch Joseph und Zulika (Zürich 1753), noch die „tragischen Styke“, der erkannte Joseph, und der keusche Joseph (Zürich 1754) haben mit dem Rowe'schen Joseph mehr gemein, als was die gemeinsame biblische Quelle enthält. Und doch war Elizabeth Rowe dem Bodmer'schen Kreise bekannt. Wieland hat zur Verteidigung der unglückseligen dramatischen Machwerke Bodmers einen Vorbericht und eine Anzahl Briefe geschrieben; im letzten derselben<sup>21</sup> bezieht er sich auf die „Letters moral and entertaining“.

Ganz eigenartig nimmt sich unter all den religiösen und Schäferdichtungen das Liebeslied eines Lappländers<sup>22</sup> aus, für dessen Entstehung uns leider das Datum fehlt. Bekanntlich hat es in England zu allen Zeiten Dichter gegeben, welche Sinn für die Schönheiten der Volkspoesie besaßen. Shakespeare's Name müsste hierbei obenan stehen, auch Sir Philip

<sup>19</sup> 1. Mos. 46, 29.

<sup>20</sup> In der Ode: „Die künftige Geliebte“ — gedichtet Ende 1747 oder Anfang 1748 — wird Elizabeth Singer von Klopstock als Dichterin des Joseph erwähnt:

. . . . . Ist, Singer, dein heiliger Name?

Singer, die Joseph und den, welchen sie liebte, besang.

<sup>21</sup> Schreiben des Herausgebers an Herrn Johann (Caspar) Hess).

<sup>22</sup> A Lapplander's Song to his Mistress. Works III, 104.

Sidney, Ben Jonson, ja sogar Dryden waren Bewunderer der Volkslieder: unzweifelhaft das grösste Verdienst aber hat sich Addison erworben, der im *Spectator* wiederholt<sup>24</sup> und ausführlich den Wert dieser Dichtungen hervorhebt. Ist es nicht begreiflich, dass auch sein Genosse Steele an der Begeisterung teilnahm? Zweimal<sup>25</sup> kommt er auf diesen Gegenstand zu sprechen und zwar ausgehend von dem Werke eines Deutschen. Der Strassburger Johannes Scheffer (geb. 1621) war wegen seiner grossen Gelehrsamkeit von der Königin Christine nach Schweden berufen worden und bekleidete in der Folge die Stelle eines Professors der Rechte und der Rhetorik an der Universität Upsala. Unter seinen zahlreichen Werken befindet sich auch eine Beschreibung Lapplands in lateinischer Sprache, welche sofort nach dem Erscheinen ins Englische übersetzt wurde.<sup>26</sup> Diese Schrift enthält ein lappländisches Liebeslied, das dem scharfen Auge des „*Spectator*“ nicht entgehen konnte. In einer Übertragung von Ambrose Philips<sup>27</sup> macht er seine Leser damit bekannt und bemerkt, dass sich in diesem einfachen Liede Gefühle der Liebe finden, die der Griechen und Römer würdig wären. Bedeutungsvoll für Elizabeth Rowe ist nun, dass auch sie diese Schönheiten empfand: ob sie aber die Anregung von Steele empfingen, oder ob sie mit der Oxford-Übersetzung vertraut war, lässt sich kaum entscheiden.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> No. 70, 71, 85.

<sup>25</sup> No. 393 (30. April 1712) und 406 (16. Juni 1712).

<sup>26</sup> *Lapponia* 1673; die Oxford-Übersetzung 1674. Eine deutsche Übersetzung folgte „Frankfurt am Mayn und Leipzig“ 1675.

<sup>27</sup> Er war Addison's Freund und wurde von Pope aufs Bitterste verfolgt.

<sup>28</sup> Um dem Leser die Lösung dieser Frage zu ermöglichen, gebe ich hier den Anfang der drei Übersetzungen:

a Oxford-Übersetzung 1674.

With brightest beams let the sun shine  
On Orra Moor.  
Could I be sure  
That from the top o' th' lofty pine  
I Orra Moor might see,  
I to his highest bough would climb,  
And with industrious labour try  
Thence to descry  
My mistress if that there she be

Wohl hat die Bearbeiterin allerlei Wendungen, die Volkstümlichkeit beanspruchen dürfen; aber sie ist die, die den guten Geschmack besass, statt aller Künstelei populäre Chevy-Chase-Strophe zu gebrauchen. Das kleine Lied

Could I but know amidst what flowers  
Or in what shade she stays,  
The gaudy bowers,  
With all their verdant pride  
Their blossoms and their sprays,  
Which make my mistress disappear,  
And her in envious darkness hide,  
I from the roots and beds of earth would tear. etc.

*h. Steele (resp. Ambrose Phillips) 1712.*

Thou rising sun, whose gladsome ray  
Invites my fair to rural play,  
Dispel the mist, and clear the skies,  
And bring my Orra to my eyes.  
Oh! were I sure my dear to view,  
I'd climb that pine-tree's topmost bough,  
Aloft in air that quivering plays,  
And round and round for ever gaze.  
My Orra Moor, where art thou laid?  
What wood conceals my sleeping maid?  
Fast by the roots enrag'd I'll tear  
The trees that hide my promis'd fair. etc.

*c) Elizabeth Rowe.*

Shine out, resplendent god of day,  
On my fair Orra moor;  
Her charms thy most propitious ray  
And kindest looks allure.  
In mountain, vale, or gloomy grove,  
I'd climb the tallest tree,  
Could I from thence my absent love,  
My charming rover see.  
I'd venture on a rising cloud,  
Aloft in yielding air,  
From that exalted station proud,  
To view the smiling fair.  
Should she in some sequester'd bow'r,  
Among the branches hide,  
I'd tear off ev'ry leaf and flow'r,  
Till there she was descri'd. etc.

Man möge dazu auch die deutsche Übersetzung von 1675 p. 321 vergleichen

hat übrigens in der deutschen Literatur seine Geschichte.<sup>28</sup>

Ewald Christian von Kleist hat es 1757 frei bearbeitet und ein ziemlich abgeschmacktes, modernes Liebeslied daraus verfertigt,<sup>29</sup> während Herder 1771 auf die ursprüngliche Form zurückging und den Ton des Volksliedes ausgezeichnet getroffen hat.<sup>30</sup>

Indessen hat weder dieses gewiss sehr originelle Volkslied, noch die Dichtungen im fünffüssigen gereimten jaubischen Verse den Ruhm der Elizabeth Rowe auf das Festland getragen, sondern ihre Briefe von Toten an Lebende (*Letters from the dead to living*), welche 1728 der Öffentlichkeit übergeben wurden. Auch ohne über die Entstehungszeit dieser merkwürdigen Blätter genau unterrichtet zu sein, darf man wohl mit Sicherheit annehmen, dass die Sehnsucht nach dem früh geschiedenen Gemahl die Dichterin immer wieder auf die Gedanken führte, denen sie in den Briefen Ausdruck gibt. Das Verhältnis der Beiden war ein sehr inniges gewesen, die peinliche Lösung desselben hinterliess im Herzen der Zurückgebliebenen zeit lebens die schmerzlichsten Gefühle. Ihr war der Glaube an Unsterblichkeit und Wiedersehen nach dem Tode ein unabweisbares Bedürfnis; auch in Anderen dieses für sie so tröstliche Bewusstsein zu wecken, war ihr Gewissenspflicht.

Nicht zu übersehen ist dabei, dass wir mitten in der Zeit des Deismus stehen. Anthony Collins hatte mit seinem „*Discourse on Free Thinking*“ (1713) das Feuer wieder mächtig angefacht, John Toland's Schriften „*Nazareus, or Jewish, Gentile, and Mahometan Christianity*“ (1718) und das *Pantheistikon* (1720) waren in den Händen vieler Gebildeten. Auf welche Seite sich die fromme Frau Rowe stellen sollte, konnte nicht die Frage sein: aber sie konnte den Kampf gegen die schriftgewandten Philosophen und Theologen nicht aufnehmen. So blieb ihr nichts übrig, als einem

<sup>28</sup> Vgl. Erich Schmidt, *Lessing* I, 406, und *Lessing*, *Bücher, die neueste Litteratur betreffend* Nr. 33.

<sup>29</sup> E. Chr. v. Kleist, *Sämtliche Werke*, Bern 1766, I, 46.  
„Kommt, Zama, kommt! Lass deinen Funken fahren,  
O du, der Fei's  
Der Schönen, kommt! In den zerstört'n Herzen  
Hangt mir schon Eis.“ etc.

<sup>30</sup> Herders *Volkslieder*, Hg. von Isid. H., Berlin 1856, p. 213, 296 u. 301.  
„Sonne, wirt den hellsten Strahl am den Ohrs.“  
Ich möchte stehen auf jeden Fichtenzapfel,  
Wüsst' ich nur, ich sähe den Ohrs.“ etc.

irrer Gesinnung ohnedies schon nahestehenden Kreis-  
gende ihres Glaubens so recht handgreiflich zu schil-  
dern, dass sie dazu die Form des Briefes wählte, dürfte die  
Briefstellerin, die im Jahrhundert Pascal's und der Madam  
de Migné geboren ist, kaum überraschen.

Zwanzig Briefe aus dem Jenseits! wer befürchtet da nicht  
vielfache Wiederholungen? Die Sorge ist indessen ungerecht-  
fertigt. Wohl spricht das Glück der Erlösten fast aus jeder  
Zeile, wohl hören wir viel von der Herrlichkeit des jenseitigen  
Lebens; aber Elizabeth Rowe ist doch noch mit so vielen Bande-  
n ans Irdische gefesselt, dass die Manigfaltigkeit des Erden-  
daseins sich auch in den Reden ihrer Abgeschiedenen hundertmal  
wieder spiegelt. Da schildert Einer, wie er in den prächtigen Gärten  
am Ufer des Bosporus sein Leben aushaucht, und wie die Ge-  
liebte, deren Tod ihn so ergriffen hatte, dass er auf weite  
Reisen Trost und Vergessen hatte suchen wollen, ihm nun ent-  
gegentritt zu herzlichem Empfange (Letter 2); eine Verewigte  
legt ihrer noch lebenden Freundin auf den Toilettentisch ein  
Schreiben, in welchem sie diese dringend vor den Schlingen  
eines treulosen Liebhabers warnt (Letter 13); ein bekümmerte  
Vater fleht seinen Sohn, eine Herausforderung zurückzunehmen,  
die er eines Liebeshandels wegen an einen wohlmeinenden Freund  
gerichtet (Letter 18); Philander berichtet an Henrietta über  
seinen Schiffbruch an der Küste Indiens: „ohne Schrecken sank  
ich in die Tiefe und erblickte die Grundfesten der Berge: da  
Herr der Gewässer aber führte mich durch seine Kristall-Paläste  
und Korallen-Grotten, er zeigte mir die Gemächer aus Perlen  
und Bernstein und tausend andere Wunder, die dem Menschen-  
geschlechte verborgen sind, seit die Gebirge aufgetürmt worden  
(Letter 15). Verrät sich in solchen Schilderungen nicht die Be-  
kanntschaft mit den Voyages imaginaires und die Freude an  
denselben? Ein türkischer Pascha sendet seinen Dank an  
den Konsul der Generalstaaten in Smyrna, der ihm durch Er-  
mahnung und Vorbild den Weg zur Ewigkeit gewiesen (Letter 17);  
eine Schwester verkündet dem lebensfrohen Bruder, dass die  
Sandkörner seiner Uhr gezählt und seine letzten Augenblicke  
bestimmt seien, er möge nicht länger behaupten, Erscheinungen  
von Toten seien nur das Resultat von Furcht und aufgeregter  
Einbildungskraft: sie selbst habe vor ihm gestanden und sei

ihn, seines Endes zu gedenken (Letter 16). — Liebesgeschichten, zum Teil recht verwickelter Art, werden besprochen: Schwierigkeiten in der Familie sucht der Abgeschiedene zu lösen; besonders ergreifend aber ist, wenn ein unschuldiges Kindchen, das im zweiten Lebensjahre der Mutter entrissen worden ist, zurückkehrt, sie in ihren Tränen zu trösten: was ist Reichtum dem Seligen? was vornehmes Geschlecht, was prächtiges altes Wappen, was Ansehen und Verehrung? Alles sinkt wertlos dahin vor der Herrlichkeit des ewigen Lebens! Letter 3.

Neu sind ja all diese Ideen und Vorstellungen auch dem 18. Jahrhundert nicht: Lucian und Fontenelle haben trotz ihrer Skepsis auch für die fromme Frau Rowe nicht umsonst gelebt: doch wird man begreifen, dass die anmutige Form Gefallen erregte. Der Einfluss, den diese Briefe von Toten an Lebende auf Klopstock ausgeübt, ist von dessen Biographen gebührend hervorgehoben worden<sup>11</sup>. Schon in der ersten uns erhaltenen Ode dieses Dichters<sup>12</sup> wird die besondere „Dunkelheit“ der Rowe betont, und gewiss kann damit keine andere Schrift derselben gemeint sein, als die erwähnten Briefe. Mit steigender Begeisterung scheint Klopstock sich in ihre Schriften vertieft zu haben: denn schon im Mai 1748 nennt er sie die „göttliche Rowe“, der „zärtlich ihr Herz auch schlug“<sup>13</sup>. Kaum kann er von Unsterblichkeit und Jenseits sprechen, ohne dabei der „himmlischen, der frommen Singer“<sup>14</sup> zu gedenken: neben Fanny ist ihm die englische Dichterin, die „unsterbliche, tiefer denkende Singer“<sup>15</sup>, die Muse, die ihn leitet, die er so gerne einmal im Leben getroffen hätte.

„Niemals lächelte mir Singer, der Lebenden  
Und der Toten Vereinerin“

ruft er in Winterthur klagend aus, nachdem ihm das Glück geworden, Bodmer in seine Arme zu schliessen“. Gewiss ist auch — wie Muncker hervorgehoben<sup>16</sup> — eine Stelle im Messias (V, 153), die Erwähnung eines glücklichen Sternes, auf dem unschuldige, unsterbliche Menschen wohnen, dem Vorbilde der

<sup>11</sup> Muncker, Klopstock p. 200, 205, 281, 320.

<sup>12</sup> Der Lehrling der Griechen: Vers 28: „Der zu danket die Schicksale“.

<sup>13</sup> In der Ode „Petrarka nach Laune“, Vers 35, 36.

<sup>14</sup> Der Abschied, Vers 21, 22.

<sup>15</sup> Die Braut, Vers 22, 23.

<sup>16</sup> An Bodmer, Vers 13, 14.

<sup>17</sup> Muncker, Klopstock p. 200.

Elizabeth Rowe (Letter 5) zu verdanken: aber weit mehr noch als einzelne Wendungen und Ausdrücke scheint mir die ganze Stimmung Klopstock's in jenen Jahren nur durch den Einfluss der Engländerin erklärlich. Milton und Young hätten allein diese Richtung in dem jungen Dichter nicht hervorzurufen vermocht.

Was das Herz des Messiasängers erfüllte, musste auch auf die übergehen, die mit ihm verkehrten, ganz besonders auf seine geliebte Gattin Margareta. Von lebhaftem Interesse für Dichtung schon früh ergriffen, wäre es zwar wohl denkbar, dass Meta selbständig die Briefe von Toten an Lebende kennen gelernt hätte, vielleicht hat auch hier Hagedorn in Hamburg vermittelt, ja nicht ausgeschlossen ist, dass die junge geistreiche Dame, die später mit Richardson ohne Schwierigkeit in englischer Sprache einen Briefwechsel führte, die Schriften der Frau Rowe im Original gelesen hatte — kurz, als Gemahlin Klopstock's beschäftigten sie die genannten Briefe so sehr, dass sie sich nicht enthalten konnte, dieselben nachzunehmen. Sie hat aber ihre Vorlage durchaus nicht erreicht, so ängstlich sie sich auch manchmal an dieselbe anklammert<sup>2)</sup>, und ihr gegenüber möchte ich in weit höherem Grade die Bezeichnungen „nüchtern lehrhaft“ oft sogar „salbungsvoll“, „asketisch — lehrhaft“ anwenden, wie es bei der Klopstock Biograph etwas zu freigebig als hove'scher Briefe gleiche charakterisiren zu müssen<sup>3)</sup>.

Bei der ersten Begegnung mit dem Metra November 1758, begab sich Klopstock nach Weidenburg, die ihn von dem mystisch süßlichen, aber auch sehr edlen und nach dem Jahre 1760 scheint er die Frau Rowe als Elzevir's Rowe bleibend verlassen zu haben.

Zweiter, so wie der junge Klopstock seinen Rowe Singer (1758) in Leipzig und Langensalza auch nach Zürich weiterkamen, so wie er sich auch nach Weidenburg mit seinem Gastfreunde Bodmer, dem er schon sehr früher Begeisterung gesprochen, und dem er sich auch nach Weidenburg befreundete, welcher in der That die ihm so sehr theure Frau Rowe, welcher er so sehr gehorsam durchlief. Im Entschiedenem, A. J. 1759 verliessen auch

<sup>2)</sup> Vgl. Klopstock's Briefe 1759.  
<sup>3)</sup> Vgl. Klopstock's Briefe 1759.

neun „Briefe von Verstorbenen an hinterlassene Freunde“ die Offizin von Conrad Orell & Comp. in „Zürich“, in welchen in etwa 4000 holprigen Hexametern das Thema der „Letters from the dead to the living“ wieder aufgenommen wird. Dass Wieland direkt aus der Quelle geschöpft hat, ergibt sich leicht: der Brief des Theagenes an Alcindor enthält eine Beschreibung des Jenseits, die sicherlich auf dem 5. Briefe der Frau Rowe beruht: oder wenn Eucrates dem ungläubigen Philedon beweist, dass er ihm erschienen und ihn zum Glauben an Visionen bekehren will, so muss der Dichter den 16. Brief gelesen haben; — aber in der Behandlung welch ein Unterschied! Wie gerne gäbe man den Klopstock nachgeahmten Vers gegen die anspruchslose Prosa der Frau Rowe: wie viel ansprechender ist die Kürze der Dichterin als der Bombast des begeisterten Jünglings! Und doch hat gerade auch die Behandlung eines schon bekannten Gegenstandes bei Wieland Interesse. Bei voller Unschuld und Frömmigkeit kann der brave Schützling Bodmers auch eine so ernste Sache wie das Verhältnis zwischen den Seelen des Jenseits und den irdischen Menschen des Diesseits nicht ohne eine gewisse Sinnlichkeit behandeln, und wenn er die lieblichen Gestalten trauern der Mädchen, die roten Wangen, die weissen Arme besingt, so sieht man im Hintergrunde unwillkürlich den Faun schmunzeln, der erst nach Jahren in seiner wahren Gestalt sich gezeigt hat.<sup>10</sup>

Dass die Rowe'schen Briefe von Toten an Lebende weit über die Fünfziger Jahre hinausgewirkt, bezeugen allein Lavaters

<sup>10</sup> Kostlich ist die Kritik, die der schweizerische Swift, Johann Heinrich **Wasser**, Diakon in Winterthur, den „verstorbenen“ Briefen Wielands gleich nach deren Erscheinen hat zu teil werden lassen: Briefwechsel zweyer Landpfarrer über Wielands Briefe der Verstorbenen. Erst abgedruckt im Neuen Schweitzerischen Museum 1793, I p. 689, 709, 721, 736. — Wasser hat den jungen schwäbischen Dichter ganz durchschaut: Er erzählt von ihm: „Er ist auch Anderes geschrieben, z. B. weltliche Lieder, welche wohl theilhaftig sein“, ein Buch genannt: „Das Brot, welches das Elend chriſtlich und abſcheulich Aussehen berichtet etc.“ „Autor soll ein junger Landmann, etwa 20 Jahre alt, so dünn wie ein Rabstock, wohl ein Betenator sein, seine beständige Haus, habe Döpplin, sei pockennarbig, trinke keinen Wein, und die Augen um 8 Uhr odentlich mit einem Mißsupplimenten salben einreiben, und wenn er wohl wolle; darüber 2 oder 3 Mal des Tages, und noch viel andern am besten wüßte.“ — **Maria Theresia** hat 1792 Wieland eine **Memoire** Regula Künzli Leipzig 1891, 1. 69.

geistliche Schriften schon hinlänglich; doch wird der ursprüngliche Charakter mehr und mehr verwischt, die Züge, nach denen der alte Kern sich erkennen lässt, werden seltener, die Ausschmückung wird breiter und phantasiereicher.

Die drei Teile der „Moralischen und unterhaltenden Briefe“ 1729–1734 dürfen zwar mit Hinsicht auf ihre Wirkung in der deutschen Literatur mit den „Letters from the dead to the living“ nicht verglichen werden, aber an sich verdienen sie eine genauere Würdigung.<sup>4</sup> Nicht in überirdischen Vorstellungen bewegt sich hier die Verfasserin, sondern auf dem Boden der reinen Wirklichkeit. Sie macht uns zu Zeugen zahlreicher Lasterhandel; Verführung, Gewalttat und andere Verirrungen spielen eine wichtige Rolle und mehrere Verwicklungen ziehen sich durch eine Reihe von Briefen hindurch. Nur als einzelne Ruhepausen fügen sich poetische Stücke ein.<sup>5</sup> Nicht bloss für die Sittengeschichte, wie sie in den Augen der Frommen jener Zeit sich widerspiegelte, sondern auch für die Geschichte der englischen Prosadichtung sind diese Briefe ausserst wertvoll: sie gehören mit zu den Grundlagen, auf welche Samuel Richardson seinen Familienroman in Briefen aufbauen konnte.

Verleiht uns das Facit dieses kurzen Überblickes über die bedeutendsten Werke der Elizabeth Rowe nun auch keineswegs das Recht, die englischen Literaturhistoriker zu tadeln, wenn sie die würdige Frau in ihren Aufzählungen hervorragender Dichter übergehen: so ergibt sich doch, dass manches, was von der Hand dieser Schriftstellerin geschaffen worden, auch heute noch Berücksichtigung verdient; dass vor allem eine vorübergehende, zeitweise aber mächtige Strömung in der deutschen Dichtung kaum richtig gewürdigt, kaum in ihrem ganzen Umtange verstanden werden kann ohne eine sorgfältigere Prüfung der past-Bändchen, welche den Namen der „göttlichen Rowe“ tragen.

<sup>4</sup> Welche zu gehen nach der vorgeschriebene Raum hindert. Auch das Verhältnis von Wielands Prosaschriften z. B. Sympathien, Empfindungen etc. zu Elizabeth Rowe bedarf noch weiterer Erörterung.

<sup>5</sup> From Lady Jane Gray to Lord Guilford Dudley, a poetical farewell. Vol. I, 148.









2



John S. Seward



stony stares; but the breach was effectually made — the rest was only a question of time. Mrs. Tramore could be trusted to keep what she had gained, and it was the dowagers, the old dragons with prominent fangs and glittering scales, whom the trick had already mainly caught. By this time there were several houses into which the liberated lady had crept alone. Her daughter had been expected with her, but they could n't turn her out because the girl had stayed behind, and she was fast acquiring a new identity, that of a parental connection with the heroine of such a romantic story. She was at least the next best thing to her daughter, and Rose foresaw the day when she would be valued principally as a memento of one of the prettiest episodes in the annals of London. At a big official party, in June, Rose had the joy of introducing Eric to his mother. She was a little sorry it was an official party — there were some other such queer people there; but Eric called, observing the shade, the next day but one.

No observer, probably, would have been acute enough to fix exactly the moment at which the girl ceased to take out her mother and began to be taken out by her. A later phase was more distinguishable — that at which Rose forbore to inflict on her companion a duality that might become oppressive. She began to economize her force, and went only when the particular effect was required. Her marriage was delayed by the period of mourning consequent upon the death of her grandmother, who, the younger Mrs. Tramore stated, was killed by the rumor of her own new birth. She was the only one of the dragons who had n't been tamed. Julia Tramore knew the truth about this, and she was

determined such things should not kill her. She would live to do something — she hardly knew what. The provisions of her mother's will were published in the Illustrated News; from which it appeared that everything that was not to go to Eric and to Julia was to go to the fortunate Edith. Miss Tramore makes no secret of her own intentions as regards this favorite. Edith is not pretty, but Lady Maresfield is waiting for her; she is determined Gwendolen Vesey shall not get hold of her. Mrs. Vesey, however, takes no interest in her at all. She is whimsical, as befits a woman of her fashion; but there are two persons she is still very fond of, the delightful Bertram boys. The fondness of this pair, it must be added, is not wholly expended in return. They are extremely united, but their life is more domestic than might have been expected from the preliminary signs. It owes a portion of this peculiar intensity of quietude to the fact that Mrs. Tramore has now so many places to go to that she has almost no time to come to her daughter's. She is, under her son-in-law's roof, a brilliant but a rare apparition, and the other day he remarked upon the circumstance to his wife.

"If it had n't been for you," she replied, smiling, "she might have had her regular place at our fireside."

"Good heavens, how did I prevent it?" cried Captain Jay, with all the consciousness of virtue.

"You ordered it otherwise, you goose!" And she says, in the same spirit, whenever her husband commends her (which he does, sometimes, extravagantly) for the way she launched her mother. "Nonsense, my dear: practically it was you!"

Henry James.

## JOSEPH SEVERN AND HIS CORRESPONDENTS.

THE following letters have been selected from the unpublished correspondence of the late Joseph Severn, a name familiar to all lovers of Keats. The first three have been chosen for a special reason, though written by different persons and at wide intervals; for they have this in common, that each is the first letter written in Venice, respectively, by a notable sculptor, an eminent painter, and the foremost art writer of our time.

Westmacott, the first in order, the son of Sir Richard Westmacott, was then a young man, as he was born in 1799. He went to Italy in 1820 to study at Rome, where he became acquainted with Severn shortly before the death of Keats; and from that time forward their friendship was an intimate one. Severn never actively sought academical honors, and to the day of his death was an outsider, though, long before, Westmacott, Thomas Uwins, Charles Eastlake, Sir George Hayter, and others of his "circle" obtained ample official recognition. Westmacott, who became Associate in 1838, R. A. in 1849, and Professor of Sculpture in 1857, died seven years before his older friend. He is now perhaps best known by his excellent Handbook on the Schools of Sculpture; for his finest works in his particular art are mostly in private hands, as notably in the instance of The Cymbal Player, his *chef-d'œuvre*, in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire.

In the early part of the century visitors were fortunate in having to approach Venice from the Paduan mainland by water, — a route, however, as Westmacott adds in a postscript to his letter, "not to be recommended to ladies."

## I. FROM RICHARD WESTMACOTT.

VENICE, May 20, 1824.

MY DEAR SEVERN, — *Eccomi quà* at last, full of wonder and admiration of the

famed though fallen spouse of the Adriatic. I have always studiously avoided looking at views or reading or listening to descriptions of Venice, wishing to come upon it at once without any prejudice, and if possible to save myself a disappointment upon seeing the original after reading some account of it like Eustace's and Piranesi's of Rome, which we all agree are humbugs, and only lead one astray. I have been well repaid for waiting for the reality, — any description must fall short of it. My imagination sometimes gets upon stilts, and I had of course *fancied a sort of city* in the water, with latticed windows, orange-trees, gondolas, etc., but I had not neared the original. I came from Ferrara by water, and I think few things can be more beautiful than the scene that presented itself as soon as we entered the principal canal of Venice. It was about four o'clock in the evening, and the weather, though the sky was not quite Italian, very fine. I can't tell you how I felt as we cut through the water. I was full of Desdemona, Shylock, Pierre, Belvidera, old Dandolo, and fifty other delightful and interesting associations; but you have seen it all, and are just the sort of chap to enjoy it, so I need not tease you with any details of the *what* nor the *why* I admired. As soon as I could I saw the Rialto, then S. Mark, then the Bridge of Sighs, "on either side a Palace and a Prison;" in fact, from the time of my arrival I have been running about devouring whatever came in my way. I am now driven in by darkness and fatigue, and before going to my couch have resolved to keep my promise of writing to my dear Giuseppe.

Mr. Brown told me he had written to you. I suppose he told you of my having proceeded almost immediately on

my arrival at Florence to Carrara. I returned in a few days, and was glad to avail myself of his kind offer of an introduction to Mr. Leigh Hunt. I saw but little of him, unfortunately for me, but that little made me regret that our acquaintance was so lately made and so soon to be interrupted. I spent much of my last day in Florence with him and Mr. Brown in the Vale of the Belle Donne, which we all enjoyed very much. Could I have remained longer in dear Tuscany we should have spent many pleasant days together, I dare say, for Mr. Brown is just the man to be happy with, and I feel I should have liked Mr. Hunt more and more every time I met him.

I saw the Brunino, and think him a very fine little fellow; your miniature is certainly very like him. He speaks nothing but Italian, and his papa, like all papas, is not a little proud of him. I thought our old plague Johnny Hunt looked very ill. I think he must be improved, for although he tried to bolt up to me with his taking, innocent-sounding "Ah! how d'ye do, sir!" I saw he made himself scarce as soon as possible. Poor child! or rather, poor parents! I suspect a bad child is a curse of which no single gentlemen can't even imagine the bitterness. God save us from it if ever we become Benedicts. . . .

I meant to stay here seven or eight days, in which time they tell me I may see Venice pretty well. I am still with Mr. Critshell, and it is probable we may make a long journey together. I wish I had a brother artist here, such as yourself or Kirkup. A sculptor ought not to go picture-hunting alone; he loses half the things worth seeing, or frequently passes by a *non ce male* work just for want of knowing where and how to take it. I however think myself very fortunate in having found so gentlemanly and agreeable a companion as Mr. Critshell. I never could feel happy nor enjoy anything alone, *solus*. Had I not had companions from Rome

I don't know what I should have done. You recollect what a weeping, miserable, mourning day we had to start on by way of helping me to recover my *spirits*, Gesu Maria! but Mr. Brown made us all merry, after a fashion, in spite of ourselves.

Well, I won't imagine I am not to return to Rome next year. A letter lately received from my father is neither one thing nor the other, but in my mind full of *unintelligibles*. *Sto sperando*. . . .

God bless you. Yours truly,

RICHARD WESTMACOTT.

Some seven or eight months earlier Severn had himself made his first visit to Venice, in company with the friend who was his most intimate and loyal comrade, as well as of Keats, — Charles Armitage Brown, the Mr. Brown of the foregoing letter. The visit had a material effect upon his practice in painting, and then and afterwards he held the beautiful city on the Adriatic to be the true Mecca for the painter.

Though nominally resident in Rome from the time when he went thither with Keats till he left it, for a prolonged period, in 1841, Severn went to England on a short visit in 1837. When in London he made the acquaintance of a young artist of rare accomplishment as well as promise, the late George Richmond, R. A. All readers of *Præterita* (vol. ii. chap. ii.) will remember Mr. Ruskin's tribute to Mr. Richmond, and how the writer first stumbled upon the two artists as he was ascending the stairs of Severn's house in the Via Rasella, on his way to present a letter of introduction to the elder. After his stay in Rome George Richmond went on to Venice, in July, 1839. Shortly thereafter Severn received the following letter from him. The Lord Clifford alluded to at the close of the letter was a remarkable man. As a Roman Catholic and the nephew of Cardinal Weld, he was *persona grata* at the papal court. The story of his

devotion to the people during the frightful visitation of cholera earlier in the thirties is one of dauntless heroism.

II. FROM GEORGE RICHMOND.

VENICE, *July 24, 1839.*

MY DEAR SEVERN, — I promised you a letter, so here goes; but you must not expect a fine critique on Venetian art, ravings about their glazing, or any wonderful discoveries about gray grounds, for I am sorry to say I have made none, but have looked, when I have not been at work (which has been seldom), with much such eyes as others, I expect, bring, quite willing to be pleased, and therefore have not been disappointed. Here nature has triumphed over art, or rather nature and art have combined, in the evening of every fine day, to beat everything that ever was or will be for splendor and gorgeousness of effect in the view from the water, at sunset, of S. Mark's and all the rich accompaniments about it. I pay you an honest compliment in saying it has often reminded me of the beautiful sketch you made of this as a background to your picture of Venice.

Well, I must say I have not been so surprised as I expected by the works I have yet seen, for the Palazzo S. Marco I have not yet visited. In Rome I was thunderstruck at the first view of its treasures; in Venice I have been less astonished than delighted, and I find its treasures grow on me daily. One thing is to be said in explanation of this: that out of Rome one can hardly know Raffaello or Michael Angelo at all, but out of Venice one may be perfectly acquainted with Titian and Paolo Veronese. Tintoretto is the man whom one sees for the first time here, and truly I have been astounded by the magnificence and daring character of his works, both in design and color. He puts me often in mind of Rembrandt, but he is immensely stronger in invention; indeed, some of the works in the Scuola of San

Rocco rank him with the great designers of the Roman and Florentine schools. What a group of women that is, in the great picture of the Crucifixion, at the foot of the cross! I very much doubt if Volterra's so much celebrated one in S. Trinità di Monte surpasses it. Art seems but a plaything in his hands, and this overboldness has often betrayed him into errors, not to say signal failures, for such a man. The Assumption of Titian's is a surprising picture, full of greatness of intention and in the execution; but the figures strike me as no more or less than picturesque books, excepting the children and angels, some of which equal anything I have seen. But the picture of pictures, to my taste, is the large Paolo Veronese, which for vivacity and freeness of execution united to a most enchanting tone over the whole is one of the wonders of art. I don't think anything can be finer or more simply painted. It strikes me as a far more agreeable whole than the large picture in the Louvre.

I have just begun a copy of two figures the size of the originals. They stand before a pillar something such [sketch follows], and I think for intensity of character nothing I ever saw surpasses them. The great fat fellow with the hanging-looking Moor beside him is worthy of Michael Angelo. Do you not think, for style, that Paolo is even better to study than Titian? By the bye, what curious works the later ones of Titian! They put me something in mind of old Northcote's painting, they look so muddled and pottered over, just what one would look for as the result of extreme old age. A work they show of his early youth gives promise of all that followed.

To have been in order, I should have told you that we stayed a whole day at Bologna, so that I had at least one hearty good look at the gallery there, which surprised me by its riches; although small, it is very perfect. All the pictures are good, and many of them are first-rate

specimens of the masters. What a sober, subdued, and grand tone pervades the works of their school! I certainly think they went very far towards achieving their object of uniting to the tone and color of Venice the gusto in design of Rome and Florence. I made a number of little sketches while I stayed, just taking the plan of some of the finest works, and I shall do this now wherever I go. Since I came here I have made ten water-colors of the best pictures in the Belle Arti, which I think will be of use to me. I am sure you are right in recommending a sketch whenever it may be got, for it remains, while mere impressions are fugitive as the day. What rascally cheats these Venetians are! and yet very good people in their way, wonderfully civil, and at the galleries (oh, what a contrast to Rome!) they are perfection; one has but to apply, and entrance to study is obtained instantly.

Pray give my love to the illustrissimo blackguard Agricola when you see him. I speak of his maldirection wherever I can, for such a man ought to be removed from his post. As I did not see Lord Clifford when I called the last day I was in Rome, will you be so kind as to present my most respectful remembrance to him, and offer my very best thanks for the many favors I received at his hands? . . .

Ever your truly obliged and faithful friend,  
GEORGE RICHMOND.

Some four years later Severn was the fortunate recipient of a long letter giving Mr. Ruskin's first impressions of Venice. The allusion in the second sentence is to Severn's having gained one of the premiums at the Westminster Hall Cartoons Competition, and in reply, also, to a long letter concerning his hopes for fresco-painting in England, and his own determination to succeed in this genre, if success could be obtained at any cost. At a later date, I may add, he gained his wish in a commission from

the dowager Countess of Warwick to paint a series of frescoes at her beautiful place in Surrey, which was presented to her by her son. It is doubtful, for reasons unnecessary to go into here, whether fortune would have further favored him in this. All his artistic projects in England were arrested when, in 1860, he applied for and ultimately gained the vacant office of British consul at Rome. This post he held till 1872, seven years before his death;<sup>1</sup> and it was in the second year of his tenure (1863) that he wrote for the *Atlantic Monthly* his now famous article *On the Vicissitudes of Keats's Fame*.

This letter from Mr. Ruskin is psychologically significant as well as interesting in other respects, for it shows that the writer was in 1843 essentially the same man that we know to-day.

### III. FROM JOHN RUSKIN.

VENICE, September 21, 1843.

MY DEAR SIR, — I am sure you will excuse my not having answered your kind letter before when I tell you that I have been altogether unbinged by the condition in which I have found Venice, and that every time I stir out-of-doors I return too insensible to write or almost to speak to any one. But I cannot longer defer expressing my sincere gladness at your well-deserved success, and my sympathy in all the enthusiasm of your hopes so far as regards your own aims and prospects; and I am also glad, for the sake of our national honor, that you are to be one of its supporters. But with your hopes for the elevation of English art by means of fresco I cannot sympathize. I have not the remotest hope of anything of the kind. It is not the material nor the space that can give us thoughts, passions, or powers. I see on our Academy walls nothing but what is ignoble in small pictures, and would be

<sup>1</sup> And nine years before he was laid by the side of Keats, to be in death, as in life, "immortally associated with his illustrious friend."

disgusting in large ones. I never hear one word of genuine feeling issue from any one's mouth but yours and the two Richmonds'; and if it did, I don't believe the public of the present day would understand it. It is not the love of *fresco* that we want: it is the love of God and his creatures; it is humility, and charity, and self-denial, and fasting, and prayer; it is a total change of character. We want more faith and less reasoning, less strength and more trust. You neither want walls, nor plaster, nor colors, — *ça ne fait rien à l'affaire*; it is Giotto and Ghirlandaio and Angelico that you want, and that you will and must want until this disgusting nineteenth century has — I can't say breathed, but steamed its last. You want a serious love of art in the people and a faithful love of art in the artist, not a desire to be R. A. and to dine with the Queen; and you want something like decent teaching in the Academy itself, good training of the thoughts, not of the fingers, and good inpouring of knowledge, not of knocks. Never tell, or think to tell, your lank, cockney, leaden-headed pupil what great art is, but make a great man of him and he'll find out. And a pretty way, by the bye, Mr. Eastlake takes to teach our British public a love of the right thing, going and buying a disgusting, rubbishy, good-for-nothing, bad-for-everything Rubens and two brutal Guidos, when we have n't got a Perugino to bless ourselves with! But it don't matter, not a straw's balance. I see what the world is coming to. We shall put it into a chain armor of railroad, and then everybody will go everywhere every day, until every place is like every other place; and then when they are tired of changing stations and police they will congregate in knots in great cities, which will consist of club-houses, coffee-houses, and newspaper offices; the churches will be turned into assembly rooms; and people will eat, sleep, and gamble to their graves.

It is n't of any use to try and do any-

thing for such an age as this. We are a different race altogether from the men of old time: we live in drawing-rooms instead of deserts, and work by the light of chandeliers instead of volcanoes. I have been perfectly prostrated these two or three days back by my first acquaintance with Tintoret; but then I feel as if I had got introduced to a being from a planet a million of miles nearer the sun, not to a mere earthly painter. As for our little bits of R. A.'s calling themselves painters, it ought to be stopped directly. One might make a mosaic of R. A.'s, perhaps, with a good magnifying-glass, big enough for Tintoret to stand with one leg upon if he balanced himself like a gondolier. I thought the mischief was chiefly confined to the architecture here, but Tintoret is going quite as fast; the Emperor of Austria is his George Robins.

I went to the Scuola di San Rocco the other day, in heavy rain, and found the floor half under water, from large pools from droppings *through* the pictures on the ceiling, — not through the sides or mouldings, but the pictures themselves. They won't take care of them, nor sell them, nor let anybody take care of them.

I am glad to hear that the subjects for our frescoes are to be selected from poets instead of historians; but I don't like the selection of poets. I think in a national work one ought not to allow any appearance of acknowledgment of irreligious principle, and we ought to select those poets chiefly who have best illustrated English character, or have contributed to form the prevailing tones of the English mind. Byron and Shelley I think inadmissible. I should substitute Wordsworth and Keats or Coleridge, and put Scott instead of Pope, whom one does n't want with Dryden. I think *The Ancient Mariner* would afford the highest and most imaginative method of touching on England's sea character. From Wordsworth you get her pastoral and patriarchal character; from Scott her chival-

resque; I don't know what you would get from either Dryden or Pope, but I suppose you must have *one* of them. However, anything is better than history, the most insipid of subjects. One often talks of *historical* painting, but I mean *religious* always, for how often does one see a picture of history worth a straw? I declare I cannot at this instant think of any one historical work that ever interested me.

I beg your pardon very much for this hurried sulky scrawl; but conceive how little one is fit for when one finds them covering the marble palaces with stucco and painting them in *stripes*!

Allow me again to thank you exceedingly for your kind letter and to express my delight at the good news it contains, and believe me, with compliments to Mrs. Severn,

Ever most truly yours,

J. RUSKIN.

In a short article which appeared recently, it was asserted that, with all his good qualities, Severn was singularly lacking in common sense. The writer could have known little of Severn, and still less of his correspondence. A remarkably acute and straightforward common sense was, as it happens, one of his most characteristic traits. Scores of his letters, from youth to old age, might be selected to bear out this counter-assertion, but a single one will suffice. It is taken from his correspondence with his friend Uwins, and was written in his thirty-third year, a time when, though by temperament and habit youthful in aspect and tastes to a remarkable degree, his character was developed. Thomas Uwins was his elder by about ten years, and, like himself, began his art life as an engraver's apprentice. In 1824 he went to Italy, and stayed there till 1831. He gained his position both as an Associate and Royal Academician as a painter in water-colors; nevertheless, when, in 1850, he began to paint in

oils, it was with marked success. He was elected surveyor of the Queen's pictures in 1845, and two years later was appointed keeper of the National Gallery. One of his best works in water-colors is *The Hay Harvest*, now in the South Kensington Museum, and in oils *The Vintage in the Claret Vineyards*, in the Dundee Gallery. After some preliminaries Severn proceeds:—

I think it is a most important defect in any one to be entirely without vanity, because there is nothing brings out and applies so well all the inner man. I mean all the grasping and achieving comes of this; for, you see, a man with this feels his own importance (he overfeels it, but what of that?), and tries grand things and succeeds, when another may have the greatest talents, but nothing to bring them out. I know you will call this by some fine name, as laudable ambition, aspiring virtue, and so forth; but, as the preacher says, "all is vanity" at bottom, so we will be honest and let it stand as vanity. The Germans are a people making little figure and doing little good in the world, on this account. They have the highest talents and morals, but pursue their intellectual aims only as solitary pleasures, and so society is nothing the better for them. Then your English, who have the vanity to seek perpetual notice, are always benefiting the world with useful intuitions or innocent pleasures, and all this with but a small part of the talent of the Germans. When a man underates himself he blunts his talents and minces his steps in life; and, on the contrary, if he overrates, although it may make his manners displeasing at the moment, yet if there is genuine talent in his matter he will sink into that at last, with his first presumption modified into something useful or pleasing. Such a man as —, for instance, would never have done anything but from his vanity; his talents are very mediocre,

*Joseph Severn and his Correspondents.* [December,

ed himself into the  
of his genius with  
suggested others, and  
time stamp, whereas  
has. Now I would  
im. You have the  
advantages of gen-  
shments, but withal  
of underrating your-  
doubt if you have  
your powers to their  
hing; nor can you  
knowledge of an aim

esting as coming from so distinguished a  
man as Seymour Kirkup. He was for  
long the most notable English resident  
in Florence, and even in earlier days  
ranked only second to Walter Savage  
Landor, with whom and the Brownings  
and many others, from first to last, he  
was intimate. He was a painter of sin-  
gular delicacy, and as a student of art  
was as thorough and conscientious as his  
lifelong friend Charles Eastlake. In his  
later years he devoted much time to lit-  
erary studies, and in particular to occult  
isms and speculations. No doubt

and is best known to the present gener-  
ation as the discoverer of the now fa-  
mous youthful portrait of Dante, — a dis-  
covery for which, as he tells us in one  
of these letters, he was created a baron  
(count?) of the Italian kingdom.

These letters may be read as repre-  
sentative examples of his long-continued  
correspondence with Severn. The sec-  
ond was written after an interval of a  
year's silence on the part of Severn,  
which was broken at last by a letter nar-  
rating the circumstances of Mrs. Sev-  
ern's death, in April, 1862. Late in  
the fifties Kirkup turned his attention to  
Spiritualism, and ere long became a con-  
firmed believer in the actuality of spiri-  
tualistic phenomena. The Miss Ironsides  
to whom he alludes as a medium was a  
young American artist of great promise,  
whose early death prevented her making  
a name as a painter, like Kirkup's "old  
friend William Blake," or as a more  
conventional illustrator of "worn-out  
Bible subjects." It is strange to learn  
that, in the early part of our century,  
not only William Blake, but Flaxman,  
Fuseli, and even artists such as Stoth-  
ard and Varley, were looked upon as in  
some degree mad.

IV. FROM SEYMOUR KIRKUP.

FLORENCE, August 18, 1861.

My DEAR SEVERN, — I never thought  
Overbeck a *fine intellectual creature*,  
but an ignorant humbug. Gibson de-

and your years will witness  
myself a very poor creature; but you  
was too vain to tell it to all, and my lit-  
tle vanity kept up a show, even in abor-  
tions, and even lost more than putting  
my shoulder to the wheel; and now I  
have persuaded myself into my fancied  
capability, like one who, loving an un-  
truth and telling it oft, makes such a  
sinner of his memory as to credit his  
own lie. Here lies the mystery: *you  
will consider yourself the "wax taper,"  
and not the gaslight, when you can say  
that you have turned on your gas to the  
full.*

Now all this means that you should  
undertake a work to the full extent of  
your power; not a great ugly mess, but  
something dictated by your own feeling  
of beauty and splendor. Let us have  
some of your magnificent Neapolitan  
background, with equally magnificent  
groups upon it, — only one picture as a  
trial, and then you'll see.

I must tell you that I don't quite es-  
timate your praises about my talent in  
painting, since you judge so ill of your  
own; for a true taste would also extend  
to the judging its own productions, or  
*how do they come forth?* Now take  
up your brush and answer all this, and  
prove me right, and truly your friend  
and admirer,

J. SEVERN.

The following letters are not only read-  
able in themselves, but are further inter-

scribed his great picture to me with admiration and equal ignorance. The subject was a bad one, a collection of portraits of old painters, taken, as you say, from prints, — all the schools, — the English represented by an infant. This dauber of brick dust and pewter, without drawing, presumed in his ignorance to despise such giants compared to him as Reynolds, Opie, Stothard, West, Lawrence, Fuseli, Turner, Flaxman, etc., etc., — ignorance and vanity. As for his imitation of the ancients, he should have looked at the works of Giotto here for color, and he would not have abounded in such detestable lead-color as I have seen. In fact, he has only copied the defects of the old time, namely, hardness, meagreness, and sameness. Nay, he may look at the Florentine M. Angelo in the Sistine, and he will see effects of color worthy of Venice, — the Jerome, Daniel, Zechariah, Sibyls, etc. You say he is devout to the political church. So is many a solemn ass and many a Jesuitic knave.

What is your Gothic or Christian treatment of *The Marriage*? What would you call that of Paul Veronese? Neither, but the princely magnificence and worldly splendor of Venice, eclipsing even the story itself. Wealth, luxury, palaces, concerts, and a blaze of color, so fine in its way as to make the subject commonplace, and leave it beyond the reach of any follower. You have no chance, nor Miss Ironsides, who is all wrong, and has mistaken her vocation. Scripture subjects are worn out. They make no impression, like old-fashioned music or sermons. The public sleep over them, like the bedstead of Baucis that was turned into pews,

"Which still their old employment keep  
Of lodging folks disposed to sleep."

The Venetians sacrificed their Christianity, if they had any, to worldly magnificence. That fine picture of Bonifazio, Dives and Lazarus, is another

example of it. Lazarus is disgusting, and therefore eclipsed by the prevailing wealth of Dives pervading all the scene, but *The Marriage at Cana* has one contradiction beyond this. Here is a wedding dinner of poor country people, so poor that even the wine falls short. Then think of the scene of Paul Veronese! An absurdity, but such execution conquers all. Who can hope to surpass that? I do not like sacred subjects in general, nor costume painters. David was a failure, but the classic is not exhausted by him. There is still a field open: drawing from nature, with the help of the antique, and color like Titian's. Our Bacchus and Ariadne and the Spanish Sleeping Ariadne are the models of a new school, which somebody will find out. We are too old. There are other specimens and hints even in Rome (the Borghese). Etty might have done much if he had hit on it, or Haydon. A combination of great talents in those two elements, and then a genius of imagination worthy of the rest. Who can bear to think of the poor child's-play of the solemn Mr. Overbeck, and you, coming from England, and I suppose Paris! But I am in the dark about them in the present day. I fear they are woefully gone down. Eastlake had better have stuck to his palette than the study of after-dinner speechifying! Detestable! By the bye, they said that you had been favored by him at the expense of Haydon in the affair of the cartoons. . . . Take care of yourself. You talk a new *Jerusalem of art*, and speak of breathing in company of "its immortal spirits." Now, real Spiritualism is a science that requires the greatest exercise of reason. You are afraid of being carried off your feet.

I hate the cant about art and artists. So-and-so's art and my art, artistic gossip of art and artists, and early art and primitive art, etc., etc. I never called myself an artist. I said *painter* at once.

I had rather have added "glazier" than "artist." All the tea-drinking old maids were full of their pretty artists, and all the little drawing-masters, daubers, and parasites of *art* were full of the name, while "the great" were always sneering at it. One told me he had a clever artist traveling with him. It was his cook. A lady bestowed the title on her hairdresser. It is not that I care for such classification, for I am very democratic; but I am sick of the vulgar cant, and find that others are so too. So if you publish anything avoid it. The word is prostituted and black-balled.

Your "pergola" is better than columns [that is, in the composition of Severn's picture of *The Marriage at Cana*], and your idea of the water in the act of changing is new, but I fear it is not enough to be "the making of it," even if it can be done, which is difficult.

I have a drawing of Miss Ironsides' of an angel and a child which she saw in a crystal of mine. It is not much, but it is enough to prove that she has the faculty, a rare one, and more valuable than worn-out Bible pictures! I have some wonderful and curious drawings of visions. I have only wished to succeed, myself, as has been done in America, but I have not the power; I have only that of bringing it out in others.

I know no one to carry books to Rome. They won't do it, — they are afraid; and I have lost so many books that I have lent, or commissions sent, that I have long refused, and have a paper pasted in my library many years ago to say so. I am a collector, and have many thousand. I have a hundred and more of Dante, and seven manuscripts of his; many on our English Round Table, in all languages; a great many on occult sciences, literature, antiquities, painting, etc. They amuse me more than painting. . . .

Yours sincerely, S. KIRKUP.

V. FROM THE SAME.

FLORENCE, April 12, 1863.

MY DEAR SEVERN, — Your sad news is the history of a great affliction, and I condole with you most sincerely. I suppose the illness must have been a long one for a landlord to claim so large an indemnity. Time is the great consoler, and your children. Have you none of them with you? Your continual occupation is now a benefit, if it is not too much for your health. That is the first thing. All the benevolence that you are engaged in will be a comfort to you. I supposed you were too busy to be able to write. You must have an immense deal to do in your present difficult and unusual station, and more than unusual; it is what has never happened till now.

You say the Roman finances are tottering to a close. What will be the consequence? Will there be a great number of innocent and ignorant people ruined by a national bankruptcy? Will it affect the finances of the kingdom of Italy? I have put all the money I could raise into these funds to provide for my little Italian daughter, and they give a good interest, — about double what the English funds afford.

I found an old letter of yours of forty years ago. The handwriting is the same as now, and so are the thoughts. Strange it is, for your whole carcass has been renewed thirteen times in that period. I look on that as a greater sign of the immortality of the soul than all the nonsense of an old Jewish book of forgeries and falsifications. But I have more positive proofs than either. You should see the life of my friend Daniel Home, just published. Books are no proof, for they lie as much as living men; but I know that a part of that book is true. If you had the means of knowing the truth that Home has, I make no doubt you would see, hear, and feel with joy that your poor wife is often with you. A satisfaction of that sort I have often had, and it continues.

You say your letter is egotistic. It is its greatest merit. Real friends wish for such letters only. I know nobody else in Rome but Gibson and Miss Ironsides. Oh, yes, little Ewing, if he is still alive? All our little clique are dispersed, and the greatest part of them in the land of spirits, freed from this temporary exile called life, which leaves not a wreck behind, — or a few pictures to be soon destroyed by cleaners, etc. ! Vanitas vanitatum ! Alas, poor Titian, etc. !

I don't know any person alive who can even remember either of my grandfathers, and they were remarkable men. One was the first Latin scholar in England, and the other had a museum of arts and antiquities, — all dispersed and gone, like their dust. But we never really die; twenty minutes of insensibility in a trance is all. We awake and find ourselves in the midst of our dearest old friends. The bad man avoids them from an instinct of shame, and seeks his equals, by whom he is persecuted until he is saved and relieved by good spirits. We are all sons of God, even the worst assassin. We are not responsible for our constitutions or our education, and there are no eternal pitchforks, brimstone, or hell, nor any such successful rival to God as Monseigneur le Diable. This rests on better authority than any book. It is curious that Moses, in all his books, never says one word about a future state. Of what use is religion without it ?

I am writing you a sermon instead of a letter. A nap will do you good. Do you remember Dean Swift's pews, in his Baucis and Philemon? — and I often laugh at the remembrance of Dennis Brulgruddery, the pew-opener, who was turned away because he snored so loud that he woke all the congregation.

I remember how that old Westmacott used to retail his good things at Rome, — is he always the same? — and you at Torlonia's masquerades, and the farces

you used to play on dear old Gibson,<sup>1</sup> and his tortoisés, and my adventures at Poli in the midst of the brigands with Mary Graham, *née* Dundas, afterwards Lady Callcott. Lord and Lady Normanby were a good deal here and had grown detestable, — he with his black ringlets, and she a porpoise; and detestably he has signalized his hatred of Italy. The Jockey Club of Florence has expelled him, and his prating twaddle goes on in that House of Humbug, temporal and spiritual.

We have the King here at the Pitti. I expect to see Sir J. Hudson. He generally comes here with the King. One can't judge from portraits, but I should think that our new princess will wear the breeches. The Guelph face is not promising, — jowl and goggle eyes; but our Queen has been an exception to the vile race. The melancholy sight of her at the marriage would have given me more pain than the pleasure of all that procession. I suppose she was not acting a part. There is many a waiting-woman knows more than we do. She does not part with her son as she was obliged to do with her daughters. That was one comfort for her.

Trelawny used to say, "There are but two passions of love, the mother's and the lover's. By God, they'll go through fire for you; all the rest is humbug."

My affection for my little girl is much increased. She is nine and a half, and more of a friend. At first she was only a baby. You have had more experience. They want me to send her to England, but I won't part with her, and she knows not a word of the language. She would be as bad as deaf and dumb, and with none but strange faces. *troppo trista!* I want to secure her here with a good guardian after me. She goes to school daily. I care less for learning than happiness.

Adieu, my dear old friend.

Yours ever, S. KIRKUP.

<sup>1</sup> John Gibson, the sculptor.

*Joseph Severn and his Correspondents.* [December,

THE SAME.

PONTE VECCHIO 2,  
no 23, 1864.

s, — Your last letter long ago that I got it contained. I read it again, but supposed it was in diplomacy and not troublesome. I told you my friend I was sure if he would be sure to

friend of hers lately came to see me. Miss Ironsides was gifted as a medium, but her weak vulgar mother extinguished her, and encouraged her in commonplace studies under the direction of snobs when she might have been a painter of the imagination, like my old friend William Blake, who I thought was mad, though I don't think so now.

Flaxman, Stothard, and Fuseli were all suspected, and so were Danby, Varley, and even Martin. Anyhow they were original, and showed mind; and old West was sometimes a mystic, and Barry and Louthenburg.

him against the Jesuits and priests, who are, of course, omnipotent in Rome; and so it turned out, and I saw from the newspapers that you had done all you could for him. I can answer for his being neither an impostor nor a sorcerer (which is absurd), and I have found him a man of honor, by actions, not by words of his or hearsay of others, and I know him to be very generous though poor, and good-hearted. All which is in his favor, and so likewise are the phenomena that spontaneously accompany him, and of which I have had sufficient experience in my own house, watched and guarded with the most suspicious incredulity, which is stronger with me than with most people, as perhaps you may remember, for I was always so.

My own proofs of our existence after death are entirely independent of Home, and began before I knew him or the works of Judge Edmonds, which confirmed them, and they settled my creed, very far from a canonical one, either Roman or Calvinistic, which, *entre nous*, are about equally blasphemous and Jewish. But I will not write all I could, for fear this should never reach you. I doubt if all your letters have come to me, and the one I have just received was left for me (I was out) by a priest!

I know the Frescobaldi and Mr. Hart.

Do you ever see Miss Ironsides? A

After I proved the truth of Spiritualism, which I scouted for a long time, I was induced to follow up my experiments in hopes of some day seeing something worthy to paint. I longed for a good vision, and do still, but I am not enough of a medium. I have only seen, heard, and felt enough to be sure of the existence of spirits. Neither books nor men were enough for me, and I sought witnesses of my experience, and would not rely on my own impressions alone, which might have been effects of imagination, waking dreams!

But when half a dozen people were present, they could not all be dreaming of the same thing. A lady wrote to me the other day that Home had been raised in the air a hundred times since he came to London, and had been seen by a thousand people. *Basta!* you have doubtless heard enough about it, and I have seen enough in my own house.

What are you doing in painting? Bible subjects are worn out, and were never interesting to me. I have an Italian book that says the Madonna ought to be painted ugly, as she was sixty when she died. Young John lived to a hundred, and was buried, but never died; his grave moves. He is waiting for the last day to fulfill the prophecies. Read Sir John Mandeville's travels in the East in 1345, — an orthodox Englishman!

I have been long an admirer of Dante,

but I think Shakespeare a greater poet. Dante has been much with me in this room. His poem is not true, and Beatrice was not a Portinari, as it has proved. The Pope has forbid the title of "*La Divina Commedia*."

Here is too long a yarn for a busy man like you. I wonder if you could get for me the report of a trial in Rome, printed about fifteen years ago, of a Count Alberti, for forging and selling some manuscripts of Tasso. If you could secure me a copy, I will take care to repay you and let you have the reading of it before you send it me, either by the post or private hand. It is very curious and would amuse you. Tasso was in favor with good spirits like Socrates. Adieu, dear Severn.

Yours affectionately,

S. KIRKUP.

VII. FROM THE SAME.

FLORENCE, 2, PONTE VECCHIO,  
primo pº, April 4, 1848.

MY DEAR SEVERN, — The sight of your handwriting gave me great pleasure. I knew it again directly. After so many years that I have known you, — about fifty, I think! How strange it is that the writing and the mind remain the same, though our carcasses have been entirely changed and renewed above sixteen times in that period! So says Liebig, the greatest physiologist of the age. I have been following that study lately, having been too long engrossed by that of psychology, and I have found them both full of wonders.

Have you heard that the King has made me a knight and a baron? For some discoveries I made in Florence respecting Dante, so I suppose; all that is said in my diploma and other papers is, "*In considerazione di particolari benemeritenze*." I never knew more, and the minister who recommended me to him died of the cholera in Sicily. He was a Sicilian, and I had never heard his name till then (Natoli), or knew any of

his friends. It was a perfect surprise to me, always the same poor devil of a painter, — on which account I only call myself chevalier. I am not rich enough to live in baronial state. Poor knights are common enough, even at Windsor! Painters never get beyond the rank of knight. — Sir Peter Paul, Sir Anthony, Sir Peter, Sir Godfrey, down to Sir Joshua, etc., etc.

In Paris I knew three painters in 1816 whom Napoleon I. had created barons, David, Gros, and Gérard, whose sons are now senators, diplomats, etc. Marochetti, who lately died in England, was an Italian baron, and there is a landscape painter, whose name I forget.

I have no news to tell you. The government and the chambers are all engrossed by the reform of the finances. They have a difficult task, and have neglected it too long. If they don't succeed now it will soon be too late. What think you of Bonaparte's *dodge* to keep Italy divided, by offering the Venetians their ancient *republic*, and their refusal of it in order to join Italy? We live in strange times. I have always observed Monseigneur Bonaparte, now his Eminence, next his Sanctity. That is what they are aiming at. Besides that, a king of Rome is looming in the distance, and at one time a King Murat was in view for Naples. A friend of yours said the other day, You have only changed masters, — French instead of Germans. *Basta!* one must not talk politics to you. Your position is delicately neutral, and you have enough to do in your official capacity with your benevolence.

I was very sorry to hear of Miss Ironsides' death. Her mother came to me on her way to England. I showed her a drawing of a vision she (Miss I.) had drawn in my house, which vision she saw in a crystal ball. The mother kissed it and shed tears. It was remorse for taking her from Florence to

*Joseph Severn and his Correspondents.* [December,

larger, worn-out Bible  
cares for any long-  
time-place in Catholic  
added in Protestant  
atholics forbid the  
ey are afraid, and  
like our poor friend  
as son is, I believe,  
w? I heard a long  
very prosperous in  
wn had been a good  
boy wrote a tragedy

free. They are both mediums, the former ever since she was two years old. If you have ever been photographed, send me one. I shall value it. Adieu, my dear old friend.

Yours very sincerely,  
SEYMOUR KIRKUP.

Seymour Kirkup first met Severn at the interment of Shelley's ashes in the old cemetery of Monte Testaccio, in Rome, and he died before his friend

laid beside the other great poet with whom his name is so closely associated. Charles Brown, who died at Taranaki, New Zealand, in 1842, was not "ashamed" of the Bible; but he was a deist, and to the last refused to have anything to do with official exponents of Christianity. Though he died at that then remote settlement, his burial was attended by two men of a different stamp from his fellow pioneer-colonists: John George Cooke, an intimate friend of Trelawny's, and the late Alfred Domett, so much better known, doubtless, by the name of "Waring," conferred upon him by Robert Browning. Among the Severn manuscripts is a long letter from Mr. Domett, in which he states that he purchased at Buffalo, N. Y., so long ago as 1826, an American edition of Keats's and Shelley's poems. This was about the same time that the youthful poet Browning tried in vain to obtain a copy of Shelley's writings in his part of London, where no booksellers kept such an unsalable book as the poems of unknown John Keats.

*William Sharp.*

run. The English in Rome subscribe a trifle to restore it. is in fine preservation. We either at his funeral. I should recommended Keats's, but I was in bed the fever. Old Morgan died here long ago. He was near ninety, Lan- ditto, and one old English painter, Giacomo Smith, one hundred and sixteen.

If you see Mrs. Trelawny, remember me to her. She is a very superior woman, and her daughter a fine creature. Is Desoulavy alive and in Rome? An excellent fellow, sincere and unaffected. What became of Ewing, Evans, Lane, Renny, McDonald, Tenerani, Agricola, Minardi, Snetz, and all the Frenchmen? I met Madame Terlink the other day, and the Genoese miniature-painter, whose name I forget. I think he married Moschi's sister.

I am living now with a little daughter. She is now fourteen. Her maid is an ex-nun, — very good, and glad to be

<sup>1</sup> I have come across more than one statement to this effect. But the mistaken idea is probably due to the fact that Trelawny used to say that most of the mottoes heading his chapters in *The Adventures of a Younger*

Son (written in great part during his stay with Brown in Florence) were "from Brown's and Keats's drama, *Otho*." The manuscript belonged to Brown after Keats's death, but he was not joint author.





Sherley.



# THE BOOKMART

**VOL. IV.**

**JULY, 1886.**

**NO. 3.**

## **THE BOOK-PLATE'S PETITION.**

BY A GENTLEMAN OF THE TEMPLE.

While cynic Charles still trimm'd the vane  
Twixt *Querouville* and *Castlemaine*,  
In days that shocked JOHN EVELYN,  
My First Possessor fix'd me in.  
In days of *Dutchmen* and of frost,  
The narrow sea with JAMES I cross'd  
Returning when once more began  
The Age of *Saturn* and of ANNE.  
I am a part of all the past;  
I knew the GEORGES, first and last;  
I have been oft where else was none  
Save the great wig of ADDISON;  
And seen on shelves beneath me grope  
The little eager form of POPE.  
I lost the Third that own'd me when  
French NOAILLES fled at Dettingen;  
The year JAMES WOLFE surpris'd Quebec,  
The Fourth in hunting broke his neck;  
The day that WILLIAM HOGARTH dy'd  
The Fifth one found me in Cheapside.  
This was a *Scholar*, one of those  
Whose *Greek* is sounder than their *hose*;  
He lov'd old Books and nappy ale,  
So liv'd at Streatham next to THRALE.  
'Twas there this stain of grease I boast  
Was made by DR. JOHNSON'S toast  
(He did it, as I think, for spite;  
My Master call'd him *Jacobite*!)  
And now that I so long to-day  
Have rested *post discrimina*,  
Safe in the brass-wir'd book-case where  
I watch'd the Vicar's whit'ning hair,  
Must I these travell'd bones inter  
In some *Collector's* Sepulchre!  
Must I be torn from hence and thrown  
With *frontispiece* and *colophon*!

## **A NORTH DEVON RECORD: EPISODE OF THE POET SHELLEY.**

BY J. R. CHANTER.

The proceedings of the borough court of Barnstaple in August, 1812, are enlivened by a case before the mayor and aldermen of one Daniel Hill, arrested for posting in the town and neighbourhood a number of placards of a seditious character, without a printed name, for which, under the Act 39, George III., c. 79, he was convicted in the penalty of £20 for each offence, and in default of payment was committed to the borough goal for six months.

In the then troubled state of the country, prosecutions for seditious practices were common enough, and would therefore have excited little notice, though after circumstances appear to show that the mayor and magistrates were aware of some matter connected with the case which accounted for the somewhat severe penalties on a working man who professed to have been only employed by a stranger gentleman.

More than half a century subsequently, while engaged in making researches as to books and publications printed at Barnstaple, I came upon the truth of the above affair, in a communication from an old gentleman, Mr. Brooke, who had, in 1812, been for some time man in Mr. Syle's printing-office, in Barnstaple, which connected the case with that exquisite poet and wild dreamer, Percy Bysshe Shelley. This was incorporated in a little volume entitled, *Sketches of the Literary History of Barnstaple* printed locally in 1866. It has recently become of such general interest, however, as part of the life and bibliography of Shelley, that I here reproduce it:—

"About the year 1812, soon after Shelley's strange and ill-omened marriage with Harriet Westbrook, Shelley and his wife took up their residence at Lynton. He was then notorious for favouring the most wild and absurd ideas on religious and political freedom."

For publication

of Daniel Isaac Eaton for the publication of Paine's *Age of Reason*.'

"This Daniel Isaac Eaton was a bookseller; he was sentenced to stand in the pillory for one hour, which sentence was carried into effect. The contents of the pamphlet were of the most extreme, not to say violent, character, but the language was, as is the case in all Shelley's works forcible and grand, and full of strong and indignant remarks on the persecution, or, as Shelley considered it *persecution*, of the mere publisher of a work on a theological subject. I am enabled, by the kindness of Mr. Barry, to give a line as a specimen. The writer is drawing a contrast between error and truth, and at the close of it exclaims, "Error skulks in holes and corners, letting 'I dare not' walk upon 'I wuld,' like the poor cat in 'th' adage, but the eagle eye of truth darts through the undazzling sun-beam of the immutable and just, gathering wherewith to vivify and illuminate the universe!" Shelley had about 50 copies, as they were printed, but before publication a strange circumstance occurred. A labouring man of the neighbourhood was taken up for posting bills about the town and neighbourhood headed, "Government has no rights," It being seditious, he was tried and sentenced to three months imprisonment. His defence was, that a gentleman between Lynton and Barnstaple had given him the bills to post, and paid him 2s. 6d for doing the job. This gentleman was Percy Bysshe Shelley. Mr. Brooke, who has furnished some of these particulars, and who superintended the printing of the pamphlets, has one of these bills which were printed in London and brought down here by Shelley, who had at that time very crude notions as to government and the regeneration of society.

This circumstance naturally alarmed Mr. Syle, as the pamphlet was quite as seditious in its tone and contents. He at once suppressed and destroyed the remaining sheets, and had several interviews with Shelley, to endeavor to get back the ones previously delivered, but unsuccessfully, as they had been mostly distributed. One copy came into the hands of Mr. Barry, and was given by him a few years ago to Leigh Hunt, the friend and biographer of Shelley, though, I believe, neither the circumstances I have narrated nor the pamphlet itself, have ever been noticed or included in any biography of the poet or collection of his works; but the incident as stated is strictly correct."

Just twenty years have elapsed since the above was written and published, Shelley himself having in 1822, closed a wild and romantic life by an equally romantic death and burial—an oft-told tale. The

either suppressed or remodelled by change of  
and cropping out the more repugnant in-  
leaving only the beautiful poetic image.  
language unsullied, his later poems were  
free from all these defects, and many are ex-  
actly beautiful as more than ever, as yet  
on, to have entranced the world. Thus it  
pened that, in the successive eras which have  
since Shelley's death, no English poet has ob-  
tained more conflicting judgments on his  
acter, and genius, and had so much criticism  
brought to bear on his published works; and  
same reason no modern poet has ever had  
and such diverse biographers, many of them  
of great literary eminence - some simply  
memoirs, more or less correct, of the incidents  
of his life and works, but others trying to  
his character as a psychological study - dis-  
cussing on his life, actions, and aspirations with  
most divergent views. The Shelleyan en-  
describe him as taken from us in the flower  
days, before we had learned to appreciate his  
full value, and seem to think that because he  
to write incomparable poetry, he must always  
been as faultless as his best verse - making  
appear as a regenerator of the world, and not  
simply as enthusiast, or the pardonable ec-  
cies of youth and genius. Even Mr. Froude  
that any earlier extravagances and indis-  
should have been overlooked, because he was  
and enthusiastic, while the other extreme  
thought treat him as a monster devoid of  
living through life in direct defiance of al-  
human and divine: all, however, agreeing  
excellence as a poet, and his wonderful pow-  
genius.

Even now, above 60 years after Shelley's death, the subject appears as full of interest as ever notwithstanding the long list of formal biographies and essays in the Shelleyan bibliography, I very recently (November 1885), in a literary journal, the following paragraph of news:—

"Professor Dowden, in carrying out the biographical work on Shelley, undertaken at the request of Sir John and Lady Shelley, will have access to the whole of the MSS. and other collections—books.

Chief Justice of the King's Bench, on the production of a pamphlet was entitled 'A letter to Lord Ellenborough, to him to read the copy and correct the proofs. The printed. This was done Shelley coming in from time to time to read the copy and correct the proofs. The MS., at which he desired Mr. St. John to have 1000 copies of a private edition, printed with him a bundle of period, Shelley came into Barnstaple and called at Mr. Barnstaple "on the necessity of a library" during this

setti appears to have first discovered them, made use of in elucidating an obscure name and period in Shelley's life, in a memoir in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1872; but he was quite unaware of the publication of fuller details on the subject long before, in the *Literary History of Barnstaple*. Since then, it has been frequently referred to, the books dealing most fully with the episode being Mr. Florence Denis MacCarthy's *Early Life* (1872) and Mr. Cordy's *The Real Shelley* (1885), lately published, both of which quote the *Literary History*, and fill up the details omitted or imperfectly described by it. Mr. MacCarthy says that the documents recently discovered confirm substantially the interesting record which Mr. Chanter also adds:—

Copy of the letter to Lord Ellenborough, Barnstaple, which Mr. Chanter states was sent by Mr. Barry to Leigh Hunt, and which is almost, if not quite, unique, was probably the one from which Shelley has printed the portion given in her *Memorials*."

Mr. Chanter, after quoting the episode, as given in the *Literary History*, is certainly very complimentary in adding that he knows too much of his friend, Mr. Chanter, to be capable of questioning the accuracy of his written statements. He amplifies the story, from the Record Office and other sources, and also, I imagine, fills up the local details with some graphic account of what occurred, or might have occurred, in Devon, by way of local tattle.

It is convenient here to perfect the story as given by Mr. Brooke from personal recollections, so far, only incorrect in stating that Daniel Hill was a poor labouring man of the neighbourhood, and that the documents given him to post up by a gentleman on the road; the fact being that Hill was a servant, brought by him from Dublin, and had been employed in the same way before, which brought him under the notice of the authorities. He then thought it wise to make his retreat from Ireland, in the spring of 1812,

Lord Ellenborough," which Syle printed; and we have Mr. Brooke's statement that Shelley himself brought the copy to the printing-office, and often visited it subsequently.

The three publications which Hill had were, (1) "The Declaration of Rights," (2) "The Devil's Walk," a parody to bring the Prince Regent into contempt, (3) "Proposals for an Association for Reforming the House of Commons," etc. We have seen the result in Daniel Hill's arrest. It is very probable that there was one or more remands of the prisoner, during which the town clerk, Henry Drake, privately communicated with the authorities in London, as it was very apparent there was someone more important in the back ground. His letter was referred to the solicitor of the treasury, Mr. Litchfield, and the local authorities no doubt acted on his advice and under his instructions, and probably they were made fully aware of Shelley's connection with the matter, though it might be difficult to prove anything legally against him, which accounts for the heavy penalties inflicted, as they might have hoped to reach Shelley thereby. The authorities, no doubt, thenceforth kept a close eye upon him and his actions, as, in a letter from the town clerk (now in the Record Office) it is stated that he had with him large chests, which were so heavy that scarcely three men could lift them, and were supposed to contain papers. However, if there were any efforts to make Shelley responsible or not, they came to nothing. Daniel Hill was convicted, and as his master could not pay the penalty for him, he went to prison, on which the town clerk, Henry Drake wrote to Lord Sidmouth as follows:—

"Daniel Hill has been convicted by the Mayor in 10 penalties of £20 each for publishing and dispersing printed papers without the printer's name being on them, under Act 39, Geo. 3, c. 79, and is now committed to the common goal of this Borough for not paying the penalties and having no goods on which they could be levied."

But Shelley himself appears to have been so alarmed that he made another hasty flight from Lynton to North Wales, where Daniel Hill, having served out his six months, rejoined his master. He

Wyllies. London, and included in his parcel his for sent a selection up to a well-known auction-people in 1866 and the following years, that when times were bad, as they were for

the author of the book now quoted from, however, adds in conclusion:—  
"The evidence that Shelley's hasty withdrawal from North Devon was connected with the stir and ferment occasioned by the publication of seditious literature is only circumstantial, but it is so strong of its weak kind that few readers will think it insupportable for the



19.



Scott.



knees upon the breast of his panting and furious adversary.

"You deserve a great deal more than this, but I am going to let you go," said Darnell sternly, as he held the man down and they glared at each other. "Another time I hope you will know how to behave yourself in the presence of a lady."

When released, Scruggs gathered himself up very quickly, considering that he was out of breath and pretty well spent. He looked from Corona to the victor, his face aflame with passion. "I'll get even with you yet," he said huskily, with a dark, threatening look toward the latter.

"You ought to be satisfied," said Darnell, smiling serenely. "I am. It was a fair fight."

By way of response the mountaineer repeated his threat, more bitterly than before. Fearing more and perhaps worse trouble, Corona signed to Dan to take Scruggs back to the house, and speaking urgently to Darnell, the two walked away together, leaving the deaf mute to obey his orders—if he could.

Some men would have seriously reflected over the fact of having aroused the bitter enmity of another, and would thereafter have always been more or less on their guard. A more cautious man would per-

haps not only have been on the lookout by day but would not have slept unprotected by night. Darnell, however, did not give the matter more than a passing thought, and soon forgot the threats of the vanquished mountaineer.

It was in the morning, a week or two later, while preparing his breakfast, that he once or twice thought he heard stealthy footsteps beyond the borders of the open space surrounding his camp. He raised his head and scanned the leafy aisles leading away in all directions, but saw nothing. He attributed the sounds to the rustle of dry leaves moved by the wind. At the same time he reflected that the air seemed phenomenally still that morning, and wondered if some little animal, perhaps a squirrel, were not frisking about in the vicinity. Having breakfasted, and set his tent and surroundings in something like order, he made ready for a tramp.

"The air is remarkably still," he said aloud, as he stood, spade in hand, ready to start.

It was just then that his eye caught the leap of a slender tongue of flame from the thicket directly in front. Almost at the same instant he felt a heavy, burning blow, heard a loud report, and realized, as one in a dream, that he tottered and fell.

*(To be continued.)*



## A SONG.

My love is young, my love is fair,  
The sunshine's net is in her hair ;  
The sunshine's reddest roses seek  
To kiss the white rose on her cheek;  
And when with joy her sweet lips part  
They sing the sunshine in her heart.

Within the deeps of her dear eyes  
The spirit of the sunshine lies,  
And when she turns their light on me,  
The shadows of a lifetime flee.  
Spring, joy, and love become my part,  
For she is sunshine in my heart.

*Lydia Avery Coonley.*

## SCOTT'S LIFE SCENES AND LIFE WORK.

*The romantic atmosphere in which the greatest of Scottish poets and novelists lived and wrote, and the wonderful picture gallery of characters that he created.*

By George Holme.

IT was in the old farm house at Sandy Knowe that the seeds were planted which grew into the most fascinating stories of Highlanders and Borderers, knights and kings, and maids of high and low degree, that were ever written. The Scotch grandmother, in whose youth the old border depredations were a matter of recent tradition, had told her tales of Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Arkwood, and other merry men of the Robin Hood order, to dozens of boys. It was the fertile mind of little Walter Scott that received and kept the impression of that time of romance, to embellish and elaborate it, and make it the property of all the reading world.

Indeed, Watt of Harden, and his wife, "the Flower of Yarrow," were in the direct line of descent of Walter Scott's ancestry, five generations back; and the lad took pride in these ancient lairds, who were practically sheep farmers, and who varied their care of the fold by night raids over the border upon their English cousins, "lifting" cattle and whatever else was "neither too hot nor too heavy." Scott's father, who was the original of the elder *Fairford* in "The Red Gauntlet," was the first of the Scotts to take to a town life or a profession.

The health of little Walter sent him back to the hills to gain strength, and unconsciously to breathe in what was the nucleus of his life work. As the boy grew older he showed that his taste for medieval legend was a passion whose strength could carry him through the driest work.

In a famous review of Lockhart's "Life of Scott," Carlyle protested against a man writing without prepa-

ration. It was said that the immortal novels of the Waverley series were written at a speed of three thousand words a day; but going along the life of Scott, we find that his whole boyhood was a preparation.

He early showed that power of fascination, that eager, vivid, lively personality which quickened the pulse of all who came near him. His own mind moved rapidly, caught color where other eyes saw sober hodden grays, and heard the echoes of martial music along pathways long given up to the slow feet of cattle. He charmed out of every man, woman, and child, every scrap of material that they contained to feed his love of romance. When he was ten, he owned a rare collection of old ballads, and all through his school days his reading was really a serious study of his favorite subject. He says that even in those early days "fame was the spur."

He was balked by nothing that came in his way. He learned Italian that he might read Ariosto, and Spanish to make the acquaintance of Cervantes. It was the "Novelas" of the last which first gave him an ambition to write fiction. He mastered not only modern but ancient French, when he was only fifteen, that he might delve into the old romances. Discovering that there were in the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh old manuscripts bearing upon Scott's family history, he spent months ransacking them. When he was twenty-one his opinion upon such records was sought by antiquarians all over Britain.

Scott's preparation for painting the past life of Scotland was little less thorough than his knowledge of contemporary life. He drew everybody to



Effe Dears \*

*From the painting by Sir John E. Millais.*

He studied law with his father, one of the most popular members of the Scottish bar. He was a companion to all the gaieties of the wildest younger men; while at home he led to live the life of a puritanic household.

Scott looked upon his profession as a means of getting him a situation where he would have little to do. He had married a Miss Carpenter, the daughter of a French royalist who had died in the Revolution. She made a wife who could not enter into his intellectual life.

and who was a constant care to him. The situation was found, but the salary was not great and the duties were by no means light, yet these he carried out faithfully for twenty five years as

not because they were so beautiful, but because he said he could write that kind of poetry. He tried, and produced "The Eve of St. John," and "The Gray Brother."



Edinburgh Loch Kailno

"sheriff depute" of Selkirkshire, with about fifteen hundred dollars a year.

It was as a verse writer that Scott made his first reputation. In 1788 he had heard a lecture by Henry Mackenzie upon German literature, and had immediately set about learning German. It was while he was at the height of his enthusiasm that Mrs. Barbauld visited Edinburgh and recited an English translation of "Lenore," by Burger. Two lines caught his fancy:

Tramp, tramp across the sea they speed;  
Splash, splash across the sea!—

He then thought of bringing out a book of Border Minstrelsy, and had all his friends on the lookout for material. The Countess of Dalkeith was very much interested in the work and hearing the story of the hobgoblin Gelpie Horner sent it to him asking him to write a poem upon that. Scott resolved out of compliment to the lady, to connect it in some way with the house of Buccleuch, to which her husband belonged, and to make it the framework for his long designed picture of border manners.

In 1805 "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" appeared. It sold as no poem had



"The Bride of Lammermoor"

From the painting by Sir John E. Millar.

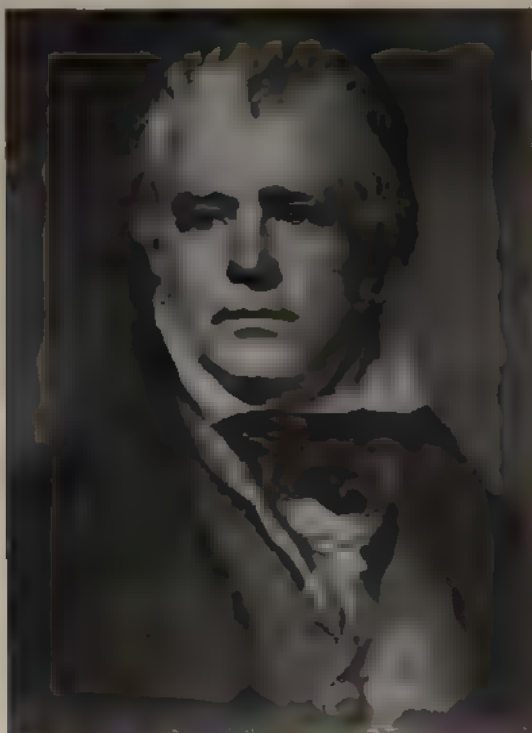
ever sold before, and nobody was so much astonished as Scott himself. It is an interesting story told with simplicity, with energy and brilliancy. The meter and rhyme carry the reader along with light feet but not so rapidly that the lines do not cling to the memory. The goblin part of the story is the only

faulty work it contains. The action runs over only three days and never changes from Branksome and its neighborhood, where

Old Melrose rose and fair Tweed ran

The success of the "Lay" decided that literature was to be Scott's life work.

His publishing venture was the only



Sir Walter Scott  
From the portrait by Kramer.

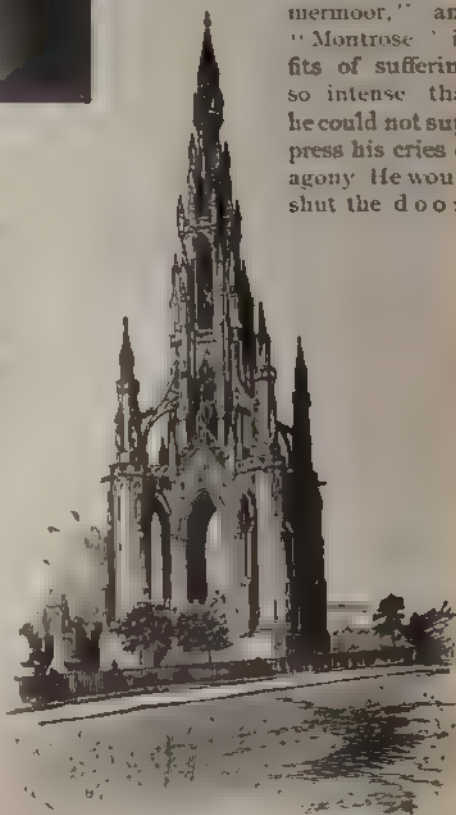
disastrous episode of his life. He was a sleeping partner in the house of Balfour and Company, of Edinburgh, but he kept the matter a profound secret, thinking it would injure him socially to be known in connection with a commercial venture. "Marmion" and "The Lady of the Lake" lifted him to the highest point of fame and prosperity, but his business troubles pulled him down to earth again. It was in the midst of ignoble embarrassments that he began to write "Waverley," because he had found that there was money in romance. Pegasus was hitched to the plow, and right nobly he tilled the soil for the harvest.

Scott thought novel writing beneath his dignity, and kept the secret of his authorship long after "The Great Unknown" was on every tongue. He had purchased Abbotsford now, and lived there like a Scotch laird of great wealth, with the arms of a dozen Scotch

families painted on the walls, and visitors representative of all the clans. It was a handsome place, within sight of "fair Melrose" and his beloved Tweed.

He continued to produce works to which he signed his own name, and people said that if he also wrote the novels of the Unknown, he must keep a goblin in some turret as his amanuensis. Novels fairly flowed from his pen, and the proceeds supported his partners in the publishing house, beside the great establishment at Abbotsford with its train of visitors. It recalls the legend of the man with the brain of gold, which his family and friends destroyed. He dictated "Ivanhoe," "The

Bride of Lammermoor," and "Montrose" in fits of suffering so intense that he could not suppress his cries of agony. He would shut the door.



The Scott Monument, Edinburgh.



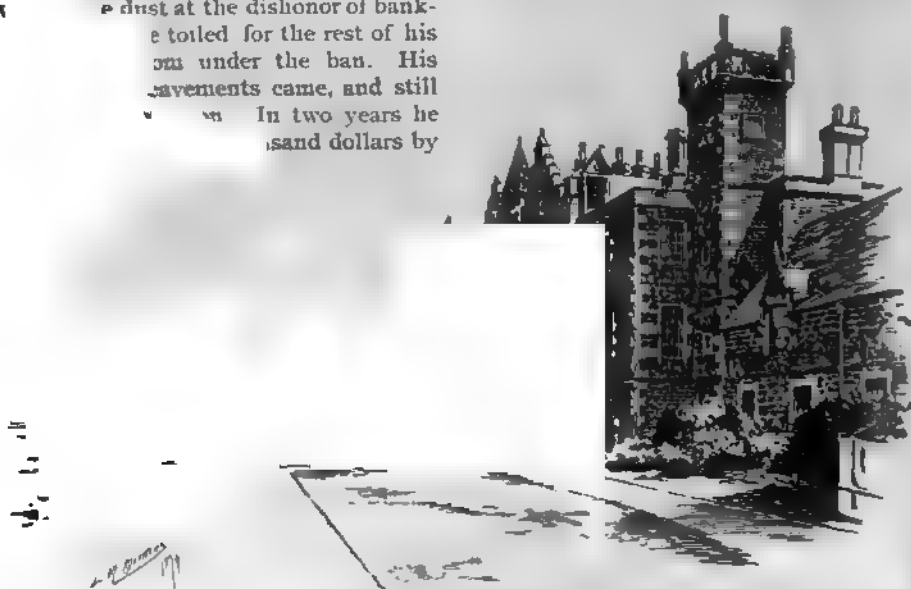
The crowds of visitors must know of  
neither work nor pain.

When finally the crash came, and  
who had believed himself rich,  
found himself responsible for over six  
thousand dollars! His pride  
led him at the dishonor of bank-

ruptcy he toiled for the rest of his  
life under the ban. His  
travels came, and still  
in two years he  
lost a thousand dollars by

even today, after sixty years, to the  
good and loyal in man, scorning all that  
is base.

His characters have become national  
possessions, and his scenes are the goal  
of pilgrimages. Ellen's Isle, the locale



Abbotsford.

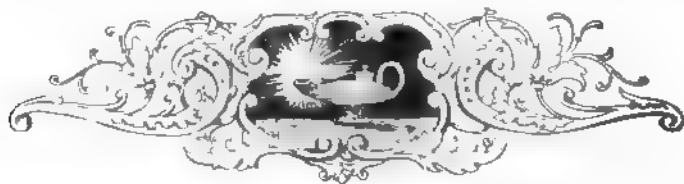
Ill, dying, refusing to give up, he  
labored on, and then happily his mind  
failed. He fancied his debts paid, his  
work done, and he went abroad. But  
he knew he was dying and he came  
back to Abbotsford just in time to say  
farewell to the land he had clothed for-  
ever in romance. The end came in  
September, 1832.

The influence of Scott on young ideas,  
upon whole countries, has been like an  
invigorating atmosphere. Bracing,  
animated, moral, never degenerating in-  
to sentimentality too deep to be cynical,  
animated throughout by the very spirit  
and essence of manliness, he appeals,

of the "Lady of the Lake," made the  
Perthshire Highlands fashionable with a  
vogue that has never declined.

Scott was a sound historian; but  
where he has changed a historical char-  
acter for the purposes of his story, it is  
his hero or heroine that we remember  
and recognize. When great artists have  
taken the theme for a picture, it is the  
romancer's ideal they have painted.  
He succeeded, like Shakspeare, in putting  
immaterial living characters into a  
world of flesh and blood.

Abbotsford is still in the hands of the  
descendants of Scott's daughter, and is  
kept as it was in Sir Walter's day.







sociated with the concrete complement where it usually appears and is not to be allowed to amalgamate with other evils, forming a group so large as to disturb the normal order of the consumption. Do not bring in a great principle for a small end. Instead of using up the force of purely moral motives in getting the mechanism of morality in working order, economic motives which appeal to the same psychological principles should be employed, and the former reserved for a later period of a child's development, when he is more conscious of the subjective forces moulding his character. Conscious ethical training should be delayed until the economic motives are working in a normal way and have created the largest complements that the economic world can give.

Manual education furnishes excellent means for this end. It brings psychological principles into activity that are essential in morals, yet it secures its results by an appeal to motives that are active in the child. The pleasures it creates are at first weak, but they readily become parts of large complementary groups and thus control our actions. A greater variety is needed to satisfy the consumer trained in this way and he notices more quickly the lack of harmony which the absence of certain elements causes. The growth of artistic feelings creates a great complement of all the qualities seen by the eye; manual skill brings the different forms of construction into relation with one another; and cooking unites in the same way the various kinds of food.

The different ways in which paper can be folded causes the child to think of the various geometrical forms as one complement and he finds a greater pleasure from the harmony which he discovers through comparison. In sewing, the different kinds of stitching help to unite our clothing more closely into a complementary group. Complex associations arise which greatly increase the pleasure of the whole. It is easier to pass by association from one form to another and hence a defect is more jarring and a harmony more pleasing. The propensity to cut and destroy comes from the small

size of the groups of pleasures which the boy enjoys. If he associated in one group all the pleasures of the school room, a desire to injure the furniture would be held in check by the thought that it was a part of a group of pleasures and that he would reduce the pleasure of this group more than he would gain by his destructive act.

Compare the pleasure of a fisher and an observer of fish. The fisher thinks of the fish merely as a means of momentary enjoyment, a sensation with no associated pleasure. If he succeeds in landing the fish on the bank of the stream, the pleasure is complete. To the observer of fish, however, it is a part of nature. The brook, the trees, the birds, and other elements of natural scenery would lose a share of their beauty if the fish were absent from its place. His pleasure derived from nature is a unit due to the many pleasures that have blended into one complement, and no element can be lost without a serious reduction of the aggregate pleasure.

It is always possible for the teacher to aid his pupils in enlarging their groups of pleasures. Their capacity for enjoying associated pleasures gradually increases with their age and the teacher must be active in showing the natural groups into which their pleasures will unite. They must also be taught to eject the discordant elements which prevent the union of small into large complements. Too often the pleasures of children remain mere aggregates of sensations of a low character because they are unconscious of the increase of pleasure which a harmonious consumption will give.

In relation to the food supply there is a vast field for instruction. The grouping of food into the best combinations and the ejection of discordant elements are both matters of the greatest importance. Children should be taught how coarse foods and strong drinks would keep them from a full appreciation of the best combinations of food and they should be helped to form the habit of rejecting crude, isolated pleasures which prevent the formation of these larger groups.

In this way they will not only be better consumers of food, but also they will get into working order the moral mechanism upon which their ethical character will depend. Whoever would make mankind moral in a natural way must make his beginning and get his mechanism in operation in the economic world.

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**SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE,**  
**ON THE**  
**ORIGIN AND NATURE OF GOVERNMENT.**

In all the vast ranges of philosophy no problem, except religion and the genesis of things, has so profoundly exercised the minds of men as the origin, constitution and functions of the State. From the Books of Moses and the Republic of Plato down to Spencer's *Sociology* and Sidgwick's *Politics*, the nature and relations of that entity, which, in the language of the Realist and Nominalist alike, exists apart from ourselves and which is yet a composite of us all, has ever been the subject of subtle analysis and popular polemic. Each age and generation in its endeavors to comprehend the rationale of our social conditions and to maintain or lessen the predominance over the individual life of the body politic has had a political philosophy peculiarly its own. Just as in the great life struggle of the animate world, political theories have adapted themselves to their environment, the needs and conditions of the country and times. Again as in the physical world there have been "sports" in the realm of political speculation; theories prematurely brought forth, anomalous to the prevailing opinions of their day. Thus with the subject of the present discourse. Abnormally developed it lived and died with itself.

Among the world's original thinkers Sir William Temple deserves a high, but hitherto unrecognized rank. Renowned in the annals of English diplomacy as the negotiator of the Triple Alliance so instrumental in checking the conquests and arrogance of Louis XIV; the statesman who first formulated the present cabinet system of England; famous in his age as a polite scholar and essayist; the first master of clear, vigorous prose, the elegance of which surprised and delighted the readers of the learned but wearisome disquisi-

tions of the "judicious Hooker" and the abstractions of John Locke; whose essay upon "Ancient and Modern Learning" brought on that fiery contest of wit, sarcasm and violent expletives which ended in Swift's "Battle of the Books;" of him, Gosse in his "History of English Literature" very truly says: "For all that has been written about him he is still 'one of those men whom the world have agreed to praise without knowing much' of their claims to reputation."

It is, therefore, most essential in order to appreciate fully the views of Sir William Temple upon the origin and nature of Government that one should be thoroughly conversant with the history and doctrine of the Law and State of Nature and the "Social Compact" and the theory of the Patriarchal Origin of Society. Otherwise Macaulay's depreciative judgment\* respecting the essay would have some slight justification.

### I.

The seventeenth century witnessed the great constitutional struggle and its practical settlement for the English speaking peoples. Her philosophers and practical politicians manfully attacked the vexed questions of government and sovereignty. Its origin, nature and limitations; the rise, force and extent of law; the rights of peoples and prerogatives of crowns, these and similar problems taxed the minds of the most ingenious. While England's statesmen and patriots were confuting the sophistry of the divine right of kings by the logic of rebellion and regicide, her philosophers were searching the fields of pure reason for the vindication of the sovereign rights and dominant will of the people.

Richard Hooker in his *Ecclesiastical Polity* (1593) cut the gordian knot in the theory of the State of Nature and the "Social Compact," borrowing the notion in great measure from Thomas Aquinas, who got it from the Greek philosophers. In the beginning man was born into the natural state, free, unrestrained by the hand or will of his fellowmen. But by

\* Collected Works, vol. 6, p. 280, Essay on Temple.

reason of "defects and imperfections which are in us living singly and solely by ourselves we are naturally induced to seek communion and fellowship with others. This was the cause of men uniting themselves at first in politic societies."

Hobbes in the *Leviathan* (1651) in many respects adhering to the conception expounded by his great predecessor gave much greater prominence to the rôle played by natural law in the State of Nature. The laws which governed this prehistoric Elysium were "Justice," "Equity," "Modesty," "Mercy," and in sum "doing to others as we would be done to."† But Hobbes modified, in fact, assigned totally different reasons for the rise of government and society than those cited from Hooker. While the latter ascribes its beginning and necessity to the imperfections and disabilities of men, Hobbes discovers it in their warlike nature. Although primeval man was born into that peculiarly felicitous state of nature, surrounded by that intangible something denominated natural law, his anti-social nature defeated all its beneficent designs. The innate irresistible perversity of our primitive ancestors overwhelmed the all-pervasive law. Men were eaten up with passions and appetites, pride and contentions. With such belligerent elements the archetypal State of Nature became a State of War. Becoming weary of such continual, internecine struggle men obtained a respite by a mutual surrender of their immemorial individual rights. Their mutual agreement was cemented in the "Social Compact," and we have the beginnings of political society and government. The state and the machinery of government existed for the purposes of carrying out the provisions of that compact. The executive, whether tyrant,

\* Ecclesiastical Polity Bk I sec 10. Hooker's purpose in writing *The Ecclesiastical Polity*, it will be remembered, was primarily to investigate and define the laws of church organization in order to fortify the English church against the attacks of the Puritans and Catholics. But in so doing he set forth the great underlying principle of all forms of organization social and political, as well as ecclesiastical. It was with his profound and cogent arguments that John Locke, a hundred years after did giant service in refuting the doctrines of the very Tory party of which Hooker had been such a prominent leader and source of strength.

† Part II Chapter XVII.

elective monarch, council of ten, or representative body like parliament were simply the executives, or servants, of the will of the people, the aggregate of all the free and equal individuals entering into the agreement. Upon the due fulfilment of official duties and the pleasure of the people, the life of ministers, monarchs and governments is dependent.

The theory of the contract origin of government did not, however, emanate entirely from the *a priori* considerations of the political philosophers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Along with the notion of the divine origin of government and the dogma of the "divine right of kings," the idea that rulers were merely the administrators of the compacts of a people prevailed to an almost equal extent. The common political traditions and maxims of the times bear evidence of the universality of the theory of the Social Contract. The semi-legendary accounts of the introduction of law into Crete by Minos; the convention of Athens with Solon, of Sparta with Lycurgus; the quasi compacts and covenants of Moses and Joshua with the people of Israel, their assemblies for the selection of a judge or monarch; the choice of the kings and magistrates of Rome by the votes of the comitia; the dominance of the Spanish Cortez, and the Scandinavian Thing; the riotous independence of the Polish nobles in the Diet of Warsaw, the electoral college of the Holy Roman Empire; and in England the Wittenagemote of Anglo-Saxon times, the victory of Runnymede, the oath of the kings at their coronation to observe the laws and customs of the people and the famous compact made on board the *Mayflower*, all were the stock historical arguments of the exponents of the natural liberty of men in pamphlet, treatise and parliamentary debate.\* The political essays and writings of prominent agitators and leaders like John Milton

\* Since this was written an article in the *Political Science Quarterly*, December, 1891, "The Social Contract Theory," by Mr. D. G. Ritchie, also points out the very marked influence of the contract theory in the practical as well as the philosophical politics of the revolutionary epoch. Mr. Ritchie traces the theory back through Aquinas to Plato and the Sophists.

and Algernon Sydney\* bespeak the common acceptance of the doctrine of the compact as the basis of society. Government was proclaimed a contract dissolvable at will. That which the people set up yesterday may be torn down to-morrow if such be their will.

Upon these premises of the conscious formation of social institutions, of the necessary and ultimate consent of the people in giving validity to any form of government or rule of law, the opponents of Stuart absolutism based their theories that crowned heads were amenable to the will of the people. By such philosophy the extremities and enormities of revolution were justified and insurgents exonerated.

Sir Robert Filmer in his famous tract *Patriarcha, or the Natural Powers of Kings*,† attempted to counteract "the rebellious consequence" of the theories of the school of natural liberty. His was a futile effort to veneer the tyranny, prodigality and profligacy of kings with the gloss of sacred

\* Sydney's *Discourses on Government* written 1663 while exiled for his outspoken hatred of irresponsible royalty, afford ample proof of its prevalence. Although far from being so calm or close, or so profound a reasoner as Hobbes or Locke, his arguments, often fiery and sarcastic, are well supported by copious illustrations from ancient and contemporary history. Thus in the following passages: The law of nature is "the only law that God ever did, in a public manner, give to man. . . . All Israel was by command of God, assembled at Mizpeth to chuse a king, and did chuse Saul (1 Sam. x.): he being slain, all Judah came to Hebron, and made David King (2 Sam. ii): after the death of Ishbosheth, all the tribes went to Hebron, and anointed him King over them and he made a covenant before the Lord (2 Sam. v): when Solomon was dead, all Israel met together at Shechem; and ten tribes, disliking the proceedings of Rehoboham, rejected him, and made Jeroboam their King (1 King xii) . . . The histories of all nations, and especially of those that have peopled the best parts of Europe, are so full of examples of this kind that no one can question them. . . . The great matters among the Germans were transacted *omnium consensu*; *minoribus consultant principes*; *de majoribus omnes*. The "michelgemote" among the Saxons was an assembly of the whole people. . . . In the like manner when a number of men met together to build Rome, any man, who disliked the design might justly have refused to join it, but when he had entered into the society he could not by his vote invalidate the acts of the whole nor destroy the rights of Romulus, Numa and the others, who by the senate and people were made kings." (Ch. II., sec. v.) And again in sec. vi, "God did not only make the institution of a king to be purely an act of the people, but left it to them to institute one or not, as it should please themselves; and the words, 'whom the Lord shall choose' can have no other signification than that the people resolving to have a king, and following the rules prescribed by his servant Moses, he would direct them in their choice."

† Written before 1653, but not published till 1680.

inviolability and divine sanction. With a dogmatic assurance that seems strange to readers of to-day, he proclaims the world subject, in accordance with divine will, to the paternalism of kings. With the aid of strict, literal interpretation of Bible myths and stories, he denied that there ever was a time when men were free and equal. "When there were only two in the world one was master. When children were born, Adam was master over them. Authority was founded by God Himself in Fatherhood. Out of Fatherhood came Royalty, the Patriarch was king."\*

Some writers and biographers have given Filmer the distinction of first expounding the patriarchal theory of the origin of society. The perusal of his work, however, does not seem to warrant such a judgment. At best, his extremely partisan treatise was only a good condensation and paraphrase of the Mosaic account of creation and the history of man in the first five books of the Bible, together with a few apt quotations from Plato, Aristotle and the patristic writers. Furthermore there is nothing approaching a scientific exposition of the patriarchal theory, such as we know it from the writings of Maine and Spencer. Besides, what claim he had to priority of application is invalidated by the much clearer and by far the more scientific treatment of the same subject by Aristotle. What Filmer has unrivalled claim to, however, is the embodiment and setting forth in his *Patriarcha* of paternalism in government. While this doctrine formed, no doubt, a cardinal belief of the writers and thinkers of that and former ages, yet it seems irretrievably connected with the apologist of the divine right of kings.

In 1689 Locke wrote his *Two Treatises of Government*, the philosophical justification of the Revolution of 1688. In the first he devotes all his energy to overthrowing the "false principles and foundation of Sir Robert Filmer and his followers." In the second he accepts without modification the views of Hooker regarding the rise and nature of society.

\* Introduction to Locke on Government, Morley's Universal Library.

With him as with his predecessor the entire social fabric rests upon the conception of the compact. Not only society in the aggregate, but the social unit, the family, exists because of a compact; the relations of husband and wife, of parents to children, are due to a contract between the several members, and may dissolve by consent or dissent.\*

It may be remarked in passing, as Mr. John Morley has pointed out in regard to Filmer† that Milton, Sydney and Filmer were better historical students than either Hooker, Hobbes or Locke and later Rousseau. They took the best historical records and materials extant to substantiate their theories. Whereas Hooker and the philosophers assume as a basis "a non-historic, unverifiable condition of the race."‡

The great part played by a similar conception in giving shape and direction to the laws and institutions of Rome and those arising out of her ruins must also be constantly borne in mind. One of the most important factors moulding and expanding the great system of Roman jurisprudence was the *Jus Naturale*. Originally meaning the observed order of phenomena, the sequence of cause and effect in the physical world, the Stoics by one of those subtle mental transpositions, so common in progress of thought, conceived of the harmonies of nature, as representing the pristine perfection of man, of which the poets sang and all men longed for and strived to reach. Borrowed from philosophy by the Prætors and *Juris Prudentes* the Law of Nature was used by them to modify and extend the rigid, strictly local and national law of Rome into that great system of jurisprudence, comprehensive and universal in its application, the code of Justinian.§

With the Romans, however, although in its final analysis it implied a prehistoric state, regulated by Natural Law, the

\* Essay on Government, ch. vi. sec. 56, 57, compare with the same idea in Rousseau's Social Contract. Bk I, ch. II.

† His Rousseau, ch. on "The Social Contract."

‡ Maine's Ancient Law, p. 114.

§ Maine's Ancient Law. Chap. III. Muirhead, Roman Law. Part IV. Sec. 55.

jurisconsults ever regarded it as "something entwined with existing institutions."\* This conception served a two-fold purpose, both as a makeshift and as an ideal. It kept before the eye of Roman lawyers "a type of perfect law, and from its inspiring the hope of an indefinite approximation to it, at the same time it never tempted the practitioner or the citizen to deny the obligation of existing laws which had not yet been adjusted to the theory."†

The French lawyers who were the immediate heirs of the Roman jurists transmitted the doctrine of a Law and State of Nature to the politics of the middle ages. The rapid growth of absolute monarchy in France was largely due to the harmony and co-operation between the crown and the interpreters of law and custom. Here again it was made a means of fixing and strengthening existing social arrangements. Its work was constructive. It emphasized the present with an eye to the future.

But such a use of the Law of Nature by the ancient and mediæval jurists was something radically different from that to which it was subjected by the English philosophers of the seventeenth century. It may be true, as Maine says, that "the Lockean theory of the origin of Law in the social compact scarcely conceals its Roman derivation."‡ Nevertheless, the theory of Hobbes, we have seen, expressly repudiates the previous existence of a beneficent State and Law of Nature as conceived of by the English Ecclesiastic and the Roman Lawyers. Hooker, Hobbes and Locke turned upside down the Roman conception; it was not the Law but the State of Nature, which was the chief object of contemplation.§ All their teachings revert to the State of Nature as a thing of the past and not as "entwined with existing institutions." A century later the anarchistic cry of Rousseau "Back to Nature" was in great measure an echo of the

\* Ancient Law, p. 73.

† *Ibid.*, p. 77.

‡ P. 114.

§ P. 98.

English controversy. The theory as expounded by these men was destructive, subversive of present political arrangements.

But these dogmas of the exponents of natural liberty grew out of the needs of the times, and they served a magnificent purpose. Political writers sought a fulcrum upon which to rest the lever of the right of revolution against the irresponsibility of kings. Agitators wanted a shibboleth of political propaganda and they obtained it in the cry of Natural Rights.

The history of the theory that society had its origin in separate families, held together by the power and authority of the house-father, must also be kept in mind, or we shall not be able to judge correctly of the originality of Temple's ideas upon this subject or appreciate how much he departed from the dominant views of that and the succeeding century.

The great epic poems of Greece and Rome, the books of Moses and the legends and traditions of many nations presented pictures of the patriarchal organization of primitive societies. But they were simply pictures, traditional descriptions. Nothing approaching an analytical treatment of the theme can one find. Plato in the *Laws* (Bk. III, 680), Aristotle in his *Politics* (Bk. I, 2) set forth the theory. The former briefly, the latter enunciates the theory in a logical, compact statement that has not been much improved upon by modern investigators. But it was introductory merely to his extended treatment of slavery and is not elaborated. Again we must remember that the society which he saw about him was organized upon the patriarchal and tribal plan. The family was the unit. Aristotle could not well conceive of any other.

Furthermore, we must not forget that the theories of Aristotle suffered the common fate of Greek philosophy during the dark ages. Aristotelianism itself had been dealt some vigorous blows by Bacon in the early part of the seventeenth century and had fallen into general disfavor. Its correspondence with the story of Genesis alone kept his theory of the

patriarchal beginnings of society alive. "Its place" says Maine, "was taken by the *a priori* theories of the State of Nature which long satisfied curiosity as to the original condition of mankind. Its revival may be said to be owing to Niebuhr's discovery of the Commentaries of Gaius."\*

With this hurried sketch of the theories of political and social origins we can begin our study of Temple in a more appreciative and intelligent manner; aware of the times in which he wrote, the materials he had to work with and the current of philosophy against which he had to force his opinions.

## II.

In 1672, eight years before the publication of Filmer's work and nearly twenty before the treatises of Locke, with the theories of natural liberty filling the air and almost universally accepted, Sir William Temple wrote his *Essay upon the Original and Nature of Government*. His purpose, like that of Sydney and Locke, was the justification of the popular will and the demonstration of its right to rule the policies of State and the procedure of administration. But he revolted from prevailing theories. He blazed his own path through the interminable books and dogmas of that prolific period. He threw aside as worthless both of the conflicting doctrines. Impressed only with the palpable errors and absurdities of contemporary theories he discarded good as well as bad. Their advocates he regards as visionaries, and often speaks of them with mild sarcasm.

Temple's political activity had brought him into touch with the social and political life of mankind. He had helped to guide the course of political energy and to manipulate social forces. He had had excellent opportunities to observe the individual and corporate actions of men under a would-be absolute monarchy and under a republican *régime*; and he clearly perceived the sophistry and inadequacy of the reasonings of both "the schools." The antecedent state and law of nature, the much-mooted compact of our most

\* *Early Law and Custom*, p. 197.

happily situated but perverse ancestors, he regarded as the height of vagaries and delusions.\* Over against the *a priori* assumptions of the closet philosopher he sets the facts of his own observation and his interpretation of the facts of history. As his goal is the same, he reiterates in his own way, many of the cardinal principles of the Natural Liberty School. But in his critical analysis of the genesis and ultimate sources of government, law, authority and institutions he delved much deeper than his predecessors or immediate successors. Probably unacquainted with Filmer's unique apology for royal license, Temple developed into a well-rounded theory what is now known as the Patriarchal Theory of the Origin of Society ; and, what redounds more to his credit, his conclusions have not been changed or even modified by the researches and investigations of this crucial century.

The thesis which Temple desired to establish in the minds of political thinkers and agitators was that crowned heads, however powerful or long their continuance in power, were yet accountable to the people ; that their tenure and privileges of office rested with the opinion of the masses. It is in demonstrating this doctrine that he sets forth the theory of the origin of government and assigns the proper place to custom in the formation of law and the evolution of social institutions. Government, he maintains, is an outgrowth of man's necessities ; law, the crystallization of custom and precedents ; society, a creature of history and circumstances and a development from meagre beginnings. His exposition of this growth and his consideration of all the forces and influences bearing upon a national character are quite adequate and comprehensive.

The source and conditioning factor of government, he discovers in the family. Upon the development of this

\* Temple's Works, Vol. I., pp. 37, 38, 39. All references here are to the edition published in London 1774. Temple was perhaps the most popular and most widely read essayist of the eighteenth century, and his writings went through numerous editions. I have been able to find mention of ten. The order of contents in the different editions varies.

social unit depends the character of the social aggregate. He grasps clearly the fundamental idea that underlies all law and institutions, namely, that they are a growth, an evolution. Modern society and government arose, he tells us, not from any self-conscious act or determination but as the result of an unconscious bending to conditions and surroundings. Its structural formation is moulded, modified, and directed by circumstances, by situation, by climate, by innumerable minute but character-shaping forces. He discerns with the insight of Buckle or May the subtle but powerful influence of soil, scenery, physical environment, of food stuffs even, upon the physical, intellectual and moral energies and character of a people. The opening paragraph of the essay is illustrative of his attitude in looking into the history of men and governments.

“The nature of man seems to be the same in all times and places, but varied like their statures, complexions and features by the force and influence of the several climates of which they are born and bred; which produce in them by a different mixture of humors and operation of the air, a different and unequal course of imaginations and passions and consequently of different discourses and actions. These differences incline men to several customs, educations, opinions and laws which form and govern the several nations of the world where they are not interrupted by the violence of some force from without, or some faction within, which, like a great blow, or a great disease, may either change or destroy the very frame of a body; though if it lives to recover strength and vigor, it commonly returns to its natural condition, or something near it.”

In the presentation of Temple's views his own order as given in his essay will be followed in the main. In nearly all of his other writings he makes occasional observations upon the nature and growth of society, and where especially applicable they will be freely incorporated here.

Reading the history of the various nations of the world and comparing governments, past and present, Temple con-

cluded that the many and diverse forms of state and sovereignty could be classified under two main heads.\* One is the monarchical where sovereignty is vested in one head who exercises it with or without conscious reference to the wishes of his subjects. The other is the Commonwealth, where "certain orders or laws introduced by agreement or custom" control the actions of the body politic. Like Aristotle he considered a pure democracy the worst of the undesirable forms of government and for practically the same reasons.†

With the natures and dispositions of men practically the same in all times and places what, asks Temple, is the ultimate guarantee of law and government, what insures the capability and efficiency of the state; what was its origin and what were the forces tending to cause its multiform development? The analysis of political phenomena shows society held together by organized force; its origin he discovers in the social, gregarious instincts of men; and its development conditioned by circumstances.

The phenomena of monarchical rule and popular government, he explains, by a differentiation and development of one and the same institution, the family. Both forms have their beginning in the organization of the family and the despotic authority of the house father in primitive times. The absolute supremacy of the patriarch arose from the natural relations of parent to offspring. What we may call the natural authority of the father began with the helpless state of the child. Its utterly dependent condition, the anxious care and constant protection needed during its formative periods; the labors and deprivations the parent undergoes in order to sustain its life; the supervision of its training and guidance as to what is good and evil, these and many other reciprocal relations augment the father's so-called natural right to obedience and the duty of the child

\* Pp. 30-35.

† P. 46.

to give it.\* "Law is the parent's word in early society." † It is in this unconscious or, if necessary, forced submission to the will of the *pater familias*, and in the growth of the *patria potestas* that Temple interprets the facts of society, law and government. The patriarch by this natural right and authority becomes the governor of a little State "and if his life be long and his generations many (as well as those of his children) he grows the governor or king of a nation and is indeed a *pater patræ* as the best kings are." ‡

On the death of the father this power and authority is transmitted to the eldest son, provided he display those qualities and attributes which command respect and obedience.§ But, if he lacks these prerequisites, or dies before the father and leaves a child as his heir, then the next son is chosen to the headship, or what is more probable, thinks Temple, the brothers form a counsel of elders. Here we have the first conscious exercise of the will and choice of the members of this diminutive state.

This is the inception of that change soon to develop into an aristocracy with a marked tendency towards oligarchy.|| Should the members of the community congregate in towns and cities and become active in trade and increase in riches, then a commonwealth is the probable evolution, for reasons to be assigned. A commonwealth, he considered, as no more than the expansion and extension of free cities, founded either at the instance of some great law-giver or formed into their peculiar form by convenience or the pressure of war.¶

With the growth of families into clans and their union into tribes and finally into nations comes the separation of the powers and functions of the patriarch and king. Religious,

\* Pp. 39-43 compare with Locke Government Book II, ch. v. secs. 58, 66, 67, where he all but reaches Temple's view.

† Maine.

‡ P. 41.

§ P. 45.

|| P. 46.

¶ P. 48.

judicial and executive duties become specialized in priests, judges and kings, consuls and magistrates. Status and the ties of blood no longer entirely regulate as in the most primitive forms of organized society, the occupancy of office. The exclusive enjoyment of official privilege is lessened and finally taken away by resident opposition, rebellion and a growing consciousness of power in men. Authority comes more and more to be the expression of popular conviction and will.

During all these stages from the patriarchal to the democratic form of government the ultimate source and guarantee of authority, Temple asserts, is in the opinion and consent of the members of the community. True, it may be silent, but it is most potent. This opinion is due to their knowledge of the goodness, piety or divine favor of the prince or ruler, the valor, eloquence, cunning or other personal distinctions of their chief.\* The peaceful submission to them and their descendants is aided by a long line of predecessors. Tyranny and absolute monarchy "is by nothing so much strengthened and confirmed as by custom. For no man easily distrusts the seasons, or disputes the things which he and all men that he knows anything of have always been bred up to observe and believe."† Temple gives us the very pith of political philosophy in these words.

Nor can any one person or party hope to change the form or offices of government unless by a display of the aforementioned characteristics they can show the people that their rights and customs have been transgressed.‡ This is the explanation of the submission of a people to the demands and impositions of tyrants. They or their ancestors had exhibited qualities and abilities which commended them to the suffrages of the people. Custom and that political lethargy which comes with long continued oppression exerts the most powerful influence in constraining men to a passive obedience.

\* Pp. 35-36.

† P. 37.

‡ *Ibid.*

Temple advances a perfectly valid argument in support of the idea of kinship underlying nationality by adducing the words designating rulers and countries among different peoples.

"The peculiar appellation of the king, in France, is the name of *Sire*, which in their ancient language is nothing else but father, and denotes the Prince to be the father of the nation. For a nation properly signifies a great number of families, derived from the same blood, born in the same country, and living under the same government and civil constitutions; as *Patria* does the land of our father, and so the Dutch, by expressions of dearness, instead of our country, say our fatherland."\*

The definition of a nation, which I have italicized, is an exceedingly comprehensive one. Compared with those given by our modern publicists it is most admirable and worthy of no little attention. While not so compact as that of Bluntschli's, "the State is the politically organized people of a particular land," or so elaborate as that of Mulford,† yet the essential characteristics of a national polity are correctly and succinctly set forth.

Continuing his argument for the patriarchal beginnings of government Temple adduces as proof the immemorial terms of address and salutation in court language and ceremony. Curiously enough Herbert Spencer in showing the evolution of modern manners and fashions from the circle of the primitive family brings forward the very same examples.‡

"These seem to have been the natural and original governments of the world, springing from the tacit deference of many to the authority of one single person. Under him (if the father of the family or nation) the elder of his children comes to acquire a degree of authority among the younger by the same means the father did among them and to share with him in the consultation and conduct of their common

\* P. 41.

† *The Nation* ch. i.

‡ Collected Essays Vol. III p. 20. *Manners and Fashion* Principles of Sociology, Vol. II pp. 164-166 ch. on Titles.

affairs. And this, together with an opinion of wisdom from experience, may have brought in the authority of elders so often mentioned among the Jews; and in general of aged men. . . . For the names of Lord, *Signior*, *Seigneur*, *Señor*, in the Italian, French and Spanish languages, seem first to have imported only elder men, who thereby had grown into authority among the several governments and nations.”\*

“ Thus a family seems to become a little kingdom and a kingdom to be but a great family ; ”† or to quote the words of Professor Woodrow Wilson, “ State is family writ large.”‡

In the causes which Temple assigns for the rise of commonwealths, he shows his intimate acquaintance with political life. And what is more, he fully perceives the important part played by trade and commerce in giving shape to political societies and institutions. His observations upon their civilizing influences are not unworthy of comparison with the words of John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer.

The commonwealth is due to the disintegration of monarchy, brought about by the crowding of people into towns and cities, and the increase of material prosperity and commercial activity.§ It may be due to any one or all of three causes. (a) The close contact and association of citizens with each other which city life necessitates destroy that sanctity and mystery surrounding the person which is so essential to the monarch in preserving his sway over the popular mind. The opportunities for conversation and communication sharpens men's wits and they pierce through the shams and pretences of royalty. (b) The small compass of the city renders councils, assemblies, and public discussion a matter of little or no inconvenience. (c) Great wealth and a flourishing trade make men more independent and self-sustaining. They seek safety and freedom from the violence and caprice of kings; and these are better conserved by laws and magis-

\* Pp. 41, 42.

† P. 42.

‡ The State, p. 3.

§ Pp. 32, 33.

trates chosen by popular election, than by the uncertain protection of an arbitrary ruler.

Whereas, in agricultural and pastoral countries, thinly and sparsely settled, the opposite is true. People are poor and hard pressed for a livelihood. There is little to stir their ambitions or arouse the spirit of independence. Their faculties are dull and slow of action ; “ having little to lose [they] have little to care for and are less exposed to the designs of power and violence. The assembling of persons, deputed from people at great distances from one another, is a trouble to them that are sent, and a charge to them that send. And, where ambition and avarice have made no entrance, the desire of leisure is much more natural than of business and care : besides, men conversing all their lives with the woods and the fields, and the herds, more than with one another, come to know as little as they desire ; use their senses a great deal more than their reasons ; examine not the nature nor the terms of power and authority ; find only they are fit to obey, because they are not fit to govern ; and so come to submit to the will of him they found in power, as they do to the will of heaven, and consider all changes of conditions, that happen to them under good or bad Princes, like good or ill seasons, that happen in the weather and the air.”\*

His observations upon the effect of commerce and the form of government on the religious life and institutions of men are extremely interesting and most excellent withal. The activity and demands of trade and the freedom of intercourse permitted in a commonwealth tend to the levelling of creeds, customs and ceremonies. Men become less bigoted, sects less intolerant and more harmonious. In his delightful chapter describing the religious life of the industrious Dutch he observes :

“ The differences in opinion make none in affections, and little in conversation where it serves but for entertainment and variety. They argue without interest or anger ; they differ without enmity or scorn ; and they agree without con-

\* P. 33.

federacy. Men live together, like citizens of the world, associated by the common ties of humanity, and by the bonds of peace, under the impartial protection of indifferent laws, with equal encouragement of all art and industry, and equal freedom of speculation and inquiry ; all men enjoying their imaginary excellencies and acquisitions of knowledge with as much safety as their possessions and improvements of fortune. The power of religion among them, where it is, lies in every man's heart."\*

His views concerning the origin of slavery and the use of mercenary soldiers are generally in harmony with more modern investigations. Slavery, he says, comes into existence when men, desirous of escaping the drudgery and heavier toil of life, make forays upon neighbors for servants. Or the victims and captives of inter-tribal warfare are given the choice of slavery or death. Fugitives from other tribes "sell their liberty to be assured of what is necessary for life." The self-surrender of those "debased natives" "who seem born to drudgery," and those "who are content to increase their pains that they may lessen their cares" are also means of maintaining slavery.† There is not, however, any belief in the foreordination of certain men or classes of men to servitude as in the Aristotelian conception. His observations on the position of the slave in the household and the privileges due him are more descriptive of feudal servitude than of slavery in the primitive family.

Mercenary soldiers came into requisition when kings lost the good opinion of the people. Such a one was called a Tyrant, who used his subjects like servants, and "thinks he can not be safe among his children but by putting arms into the hands of such of his servants as he thinks most at his will ; which was the original of guards."‡

Enough has been given to outline Temple's theory of the development of government and society from the family organization. So far as it pretends to deal with primitive

\* P. 181

† P. 43.

‡ P. 44.

forms of political life, no material addition could have been made except what one could now add in the way of corroborative evidence from modern studies in historical and comparative jurisprudence and anthropology. We do not find any extensive treatment of ancestor worship or of the great rôle played by religion in early and barbarous communities of which we learn so much in the works of Tyler, Maine, Spencer, and de Coulanges. But he, everywhere, appreciates the tremendous influence of religious feelings and institutions in keeping the social balance and moulding the lives of men and States.\* He notes and adds some sensible comments upon primitive forms of marriage. The community of wives and many of the customs which now seem repulsive to modern civilization, he justifies on the grounds of necessity and utility.† We might infer from several passages in his writings that he apprehended the fact of the common ownership in land and all the phenomena attending that mode of life, but he offers no definite statements regarding his views.

### III.

From the standpoint of the student of early law and custom, nothing in Temple is of greater interest than his ideas concerning the place of custom in the formation of law. The theories of Bentham and Austin concerning the nature and exclusiveness of positive law were so universally accepted during the last half of the last century and the first of the present, that we are wont to refer their modification and the introduction of the historical and comparative treatment of law to the efforts of Savigny and Sir Henry Maine. The doctrine that the groundwork of law and wise legislation is to be found in the persistent habits, usages and customs of a people is continually pointed out in the various essays of Temple. "Custom . . . grows to pass for a right, as all custom does with length and force of time." "The Prince that governs according to the conditions of subjec-

\* Vol. III., pp. 74, 75. Introduction to the History of England.

† *Ibid* pp. 75, 76.

tion at first agreed upon (of which use is the authentic record) and according to the ancient customs, which are the original of laws ( . . . ) is called a lawful sovereign."\* Creeds even, church ceremonies, religions themselves, as well as laws, "come to be established by the concurrence of men's customs and opinions."†

Upon the due observance of the laws and customs indigenous to the soil and dispositions of a people depends the security of governments; especially those imposed upon newly conquered races. In his somewhat eulogistic defence of the acts of the Norman conqueror Temple dwells most upon his wise, sagacious policy of respecting the Anglo-Saxon laws and making them the foundation of his reforms and innovations. His chief purpose in his short sketch of early English history is to show that the conquest was not a complete breaking with the past. The old laws and customs were not abolished. The national life of the people was unbroken.‡ Thus again in the measures proposed by him for the advancement of Irish trade, he says that this people requires special enactments in order to meet their peculiar conditions and modes of life, resulting from the many misfortunes which had befallen them in their varied history.§

Always happy in his use of metaphor and trope Temple illustrates the continuity of national life and the organic nature of society by one of the most felicitous figures in the English literature. It is not only a specimen of literary elegance, but it is a passage pregnant with political wisdom. "All great changes, brought about by force or address, in an old constitution of government, rooted in the hearts and customs of a people, though they may in time prove an increase of strength and greatness (when fallen into method and easy by use) yet, for many years, they must needs

\* Vol. I. p. 47.

† Vol. I. p. 173.

‡ Vol. III, pp. 118, 123, 130-137, 160-164. Introduction to the History of England.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 6-8.

weaken it, by the divisions and distractions of men's minds, and the discontents of their humors. . . . The breaking down of an old frame of government and erecting a new, seems like the cutting down of an old oak and planting a young one in the room. 'Tis true, the son or grandson (if it prospers) may enjoy the shade and the mast: but the planter, besides the pleasure of imagination, has no other benefit to recompense the pains of setting and digging, the care of watering and pruning, the fears of every storm and every drought; and it is well if he escapes a blow from the fall of the old tree, or its boughs, as they are lopped off."\*

Throughout his entire dissertation and in his other writings Temple recognizes the necessity for the existence of government. The State grew out of the strivings of men to satisfy their wants and needs. It continues in existence for the sake of a higher and better life. "The end of government" is "the *salus populi*."† "Government is a restraint upon liberty and under all [forms] the dominion is equally absolute." When men contend for liberty it is not to abolish government, but to change the form. Men instinctively know that society and civilization is not possible without it. They, therefore, submit to the power of one man, not from fear or "want of heart, but it must be force of custom or opinion, the true ground and foundation of all government and that which subjects power to authority."‡

The State is the embodiment in law and the mechanism of administration of the social, gregarious instincts of men. It is organized force and authority backed by the will of a people for the effectuation of the ends of life. By its exercise alone is individual life and progress possible. In the equalization of the conditions of life, and the lessening and removal of the inequalities of nature the State is indispensable. The improvement of trade and industry, the raising of the level of competition and the bettering of social life and

\* Vol II, pp. 213-214. A Survey of the Constitutions and Interest of European countries written to the Secretary of State on leaving the Hague, 1671.

† Vol III, p. 4.

‡ Vol I, p. 34.

surroundings, Temple points out, is only brought about by the constant intrusive co-operation of the State.\* The corporate action of society must coerce men into right living. The State must do for the individual what he or a combination of individuals can not do for the best interest of all. The solidarity of society, the intricate and immediate relations of every social factor with all others, he perceives in a very marked degree. He dwells long upon the power a government has of raising or lowering the intellectual capabilities, industrial energy and moral character of men by the part it plays in those spheres of action.

The principle, Temple gives, which should guide the State in its participation in social and industrial affairs is eminently utilitarian. That exemplary Dutchman whom he held up before Englishmen as the thrifty merchant *par excellence*, he frankly tells us, was honest because he found it wise policy to be so. In the beginning he had been forced by the demands of trade to be upright and law-abiding and afterwards the custom grew upon him. The United Provinces had discovered by long experience that strict laws relating to the purity and genuineness of their wares and their rigid enforcement had been of incalculable value to their merchants. Upon this simple basis of utility and the sovereign right of the majority to direct its own affairs Temple rests the criterion for State action.

One thing the reader will observe in a study of the works of Temple, and that is, he was a student of men and history. He possessed the true historical and comparative spirit in treating politics and institutions. Like Mr. Bryce in describing the American Commonwealth for Englishmen of to-day, Temple traces for the statesmen of his time, the growth, character and influence of the institutions of the Dutch Provinces;† and he shows for the same purpose "the steps of trade and riches, of order and power in a State, and

\* Vol. III. Essay on the "Advancement of Trade in Ireland;" also essay on "Popular Discontents."

† Vol. I. "Observations Upon the United Provinces," especially chapters ii, iv and vi.

those likewise of weak or violent counsels, of corrupt or ill conduct, of faction or obstinacy, which decay and dissolve the firmest governments ; that so, by reflections upon foreign events, they may provide the better and earlier against those at home." \* Again in his letter to the Secretary of State, after completing his embassy at the Court of the Hague, 1671, he writes : " The decay and dissolution of civil as well as natural bodies, proceeding usually from outward blows and accidents, as well as inward distempers or infirmities, it seems equally necessary for any government to know and reflect upon the constitutions, forces, and conjunctions among their neighboring States, as well as the factions, humors, and interests of their own subjects ; for all power is but comparative." † " Example or instruction . . . are the great ends of history and ought to be the chief care of all historians." ‡ " None can be said to know things well who does not know them from their beginning." § Verily historical and comparative politics is not a new science.

Summing up his considerations on the sources and adaptations of governments this seventeenth century statesman and diplomatist, enunciates a principle of historical inquiry which is but gradually being accepted, even in this day, when students are beginning to recognize the relativity of theory and the relative merits of institutions. It is remarkable in its complete recognition of the necessity of historical knowledge and study in passing judgment upon the relative merits and demerits of past and present forms of human society. He writes as follows :

" I will not enter into the arguments or comparisons of the several forms of government that have been, or are in the world . . . they have all their heights and their falls, their strong and weak sides ; are capable of great perfections,

\* Vol. I. Preface to Observations

† Vol. II, pp. 205, 206.

‡ Vol. III, pp. 187-8

§ *Ibid*, p. 69.

and subject to great corruptions ; and though the preference seem already decided in what has been said of a single person being the original and natural government ; and that it is capable of the greatest authority ( . . . ) yet it may, perhaps, be the most reasonably concluded, that those forms are best which have been longest received and authorized in a nation by custom and use ; and into which the humors and manners of the people run with the most general and strongest current. Or else that those are the best governments, where the best men govern ; and that the difference is not so great in the forms of magistracy as in the persons of the magistrates ;" \* and in another connection : " Were the constitutions of any government never so perfect, the laws never so just ; yet if the administration be ill, ignorant or corrupt, too rigid or too remiss, too negligent or severe there will be more just occasions given of discontent and complaint, than from any weakness or fault in the original conception or institution of government." † " The life of all laws is the due execution of them, so the life and perfection of all governments is the due administration." ‡

## IV.

Such, in brief, is a *résumé* of Temple's theory of the origin and nature of government. The radical dissimilarity between his and the conflicting doctrines of the " schools " is manifest. His opposition to the notion of a social compact lead him so far as to deny that man was a social creature, possessed of a love of company and all that it implies. While, on the other hand, he was unable to accept the view that men were beasts of prey, continually waging a war of extermination upon each other. § The " struggle for existence " and " the survival of the fittest " had no meaning in his political vocabulary. He claimed that nature herself controverted

\* Vol. I, p. 50.

† Vol. III, p. 41. Popular Discontents.

‡ *Ibid*, p. 57.

§ Vol. I, pp. 37-39. 46

both propositions. The so-called socially inclined fight in hunger and in lust. The bull and the ram, like lion and the wolf, wage equally fierce battle for the gratification of their wants and passions. A life struggle, in the Darwinian sense, was to him a mere imagination of the expounders of a theory unwarranted by the facts of nature. Granting some truth, even, to such an hypothesis, he was unable to catalogue the different races and peoples with any degree of profit or consistency. Customs, manners, institutions, all the phenomena of societies vary so much and overlapped within themselves so constantly that it would prove a useless as well as an impossible task to try to make any such logical division of men and governments. "Nor," says he, "do I know if men are like sheep, why they need any government: or if they are like wolves, how they can suffer it." Struck solely with the false reasoning involved in both antagonistic theories prevalent at the time, Temple, here, fails to grasp the fundamental truths contained in them. Society is the manifestation and equilibrium of both dispositions, social and beligerent. His own account of the rise of society contradicts his words here. But one can well pardon this slight slip in rigid consistency of argument.

Like all opponents of the "social compact" in our day, he desires its advocates to cite any instances of such convention; or the coming of a people together for the express purpose of launching a new State. No nations or governments within historic knowledge would substantiate their claim. Those nations of antiquity that seem to give some shadow of validity to conscious formation prove his own theory. At the instance of a noted man, as Solon or Lycurgus, Athens and Sparta assumed a peculiar constitution. But previously existing customs were merely crystallized into more definite form, the different orders and institutions of those cities were amalgamated into a more workable shape: "and where this has not happened the original government lies as undiscovered in story, as that of time."\*

\* Vol. I. pp. 39, 49.

Even in those cases where tribes unite to form a nation and thus give some color to the contract, it is not as single persons but as heads of large families and clans that a compact is in a manner drawn up. It is therefore those who have attained to a position of power and authority in the family and who act as representatives of a political organism.\* No change or revolution in the modes of life is affected, as Hooker, Hobbes, Locke or Rousseau would have us believe. The contract origin of the State he regarded as consistent only with the fabulous stories of ancient classic poets. Were men born into the world, Titan-like, perfect in stature, full developed in all their mental faculties, the theory might then be true or at least plausible.†

Thus in opposition to the current of philosophy of his century, along totally different lines of reasoning, Temple arrived at the same conclusions which have been the objects of the great thinkers and agitators of the last three centuries of struggle for civil liberty. Piercing through the captivating sophistry of the social compact, uninfluenced by arguments drawn from Hebrew legends, or the dogmatism of the defenders of the Stuarts, he builds his theory of government upon the broad foundation of the necessities of man and the customs and consent of a people, "Or the greatest or strongest part of them ; whether this proceed from reflections upon what is past, by the reverence of an authority under which they and their ancestors have for many ages been born and bred ; or from a sense of what is present, by the ease, plenty and safety they enjoy ; or from opinions of what is to come, by the fear they have of the present government, or hopes from another."

Here follows his famous comparison of the State to the pyramid, a simile justly celebrated in the literature of his own and following century, and which is still a favorite with writers of to-day.‡

\* Vol. I, p. 39.

† *Ibid.*

‡ See the figures of the inverted and upright pyramids representing Monarchy and Democracy on the front of Andrew Carnegie's "Triumphant Democracy."

“ Now that government which by any of these, or all these ways, takes in the consent of the greatest number of the people, and consequently their desires and resolutions to support it, may justly be said to have the broadest bottom, and to stand on the largest compass of ground ; and, if it terminate in the authority of one single person, it may likewise be said to have the narrowest top, and so to make the figure of the firmest sort of pyramid.”

“ On the contrary, a government which by alienating the affections, losing the opinions, and crossing the interests of the people, leaves out of its compass the greatest part of their consent, may be justly said . . . to narrow its bottom ; . . . by this means the top may be justly said to grow broader. . . . The stability of the figure is by the same lessened and impaired ; . . . it begins to grow subject to the accidents of wind and weather.” . . . “ and the more endangered by every storm in the air, or every shake of the earth.”

“ ’Tis true that a pyramid reversed may stand a while upon its point, if balanced by admirable skill, and held up by perpetual care, and there be a calm in the air about it ; may, if the point be very hard and strong, and the soil very yielding and soft, it may pierce into the ground with time, so as to grow the firmer the longer it stands ;\* but this last can never happen if either the top of figure be weak or soft, or if the soil be hard and rough.”†

One may search long and diligently, and perhaps then in vain, to discover a figure surpassing this in its perfect symbolism.

## V.

But what of Temple’s place in the procession of political philosophers? Surely the calm judgment of the judicial

Professor Bryce in speaking of the excellence of popular government by public opinion compares it to the pyramid. He traces the use of the metaphor back to our constitutional convention.—*Elliot’s Debates*, vol. II, p. 542.

\* The present deplorable condition of the people in Turkey is a remarkable instance of national life being crushed out by the weight of a monstrous tyranny.

† Vol. I, pp. 51, 52.

Hallam, that "he has the merit of a comprehensive and candid mind," \* must needs meet with our approval. Considering the almost universal domination of the theories of natural liberty and of the social contract in the seventeenth and following centuries; remembering what a stupendous influence these ideas had for good and for evil in the American and French Revolutions; knowing that their ascendancy in economic, social and political reasoning was not overthrown until the historical and comparative studies in law, politics and sociology of the last half of this century, Temple's essay upon government holds a truly unique place in the evolution of political theory. It was, indeed, a "sport" in the realm of philosophy.

The essay is the more remarkable in the fact that it did not presume to be a profound and pretentious treatise, the result of comprehensive studies, research and reflection. Temple, although he was very far from being superficial, was not a profound thinker and thorough-going student. He was a man of the world who loved his leisure and country retreat; a diplomat, suave, affable, dignified, who concerned himself little about the bothersome subtleties of dialectics, but took his delight in the amenities of the drawing room, or sought refuge from the plots and intrigues of statecraft in the genteel occupation of writing polished essays and charming memoirs. He frankly confesses that he composed his political essays for his own amusement and pastime, hoping, nevertheless, that his observations might prove of some service to his fellow-countrymen.

His exceptional opportunities as a foreign minister for observing the social and political life of men and the great use which he made of them, alone explain the nature of his views. The life and institutions of the Dutch Provinces made a deep impression upon him. The many and unfortunate changes that his fortunes underwent during his public career under the restored Stuarts, these and historical studies led him to account for the nature and origin of au-

\* Introduction to "Literature of Europe." Pt. iv, ch. vii., sec. 42.

thority and government in the manner we have seen. What he might have given us had he applied himself to the problem with the earnestness and resoluteness of a Hobbes or Locke, can only be conjectured. But semi-fragmentary as his work was, unsatisfactory even, when compared with more modern treatments of the same theme, judged from the standpoint of his age and political environment, Temple is worthy a high rank.

What the influence of his short essay was it is difficult to estimate. Indeed, it may be reasonably doubted if he affected even slightly the current of political philosophy. His ideas, born prematurely, failed entirely of a favorable reception. The times were against him. The State and Law of Nature filled the air; his theory was stifled. Great thinkers were, and continued to be, under the delusion of natural liberty for the next century and a half.

Locke, twenty years after, does not notice his arguments, but devotes all his energies and logic to refuting the assumptions of Filmer and establishing the contract conception of society and the State. In contemporary literature the essay seems to have aroused little attention and created but slight comment. It was seed cast upon stony ground.

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## **THE INFLUENCE ON BUSINESS OF THE INDEPENDENT TREASURY.**

In the investigation of this subject it is both desirable and necessary to confine our attention to recent years. It is desirable, because, with the exception of about a decade following its establishment, the last ten or twelve years are the only ones in which the Sub-Treasury system has operated in a way that may be called normal; that is, under conditions which have not interfered with the working of its machinery. It is necessary, because the industrial and commercial character of the present period of normal activity of the Independent Treasury is essentially different from that of its former period; and also because the Sub-Treasury as it exists to-day is a very different institution from what it was forty years ago.

For many years after the adoption of the system, the annual receipts and expenditures of the government were approximately equal. At least there was no large surplus to deal with such as for many years past has been one of the most prominent features of our national financiering. This is an important consideration. For the influence exerted, on the amount of the circulating medium for example, by a government which keeps its own money, must be very different from what would prevail under other conditions. Moreover, for another considerable number of years, the country was under a régime of paper money, issued under circumstances that constituted a practical reversal of the policy of complete "divorce of bank and State" which was the central doctrine of the Independent Treasury when first established; so that the Treasury is not now "independent" even to the extent of keeping all its own money. Again, whatever influence





We are much indebted to the distinguished foreign scholar who has at length freed us, to a certain degree, from this lamentable state of things by the publication of his Saxon Grammar. In its arrangement he has taken the liberty of thinking for himself, and by doing so has shown us the errors which have originated from a superstitious adherence to the dogmas of his predecessors. An extensive acquaintance with the early languages of the north has enabled him to explore with greater safety the intricacies of our own, and by the aid of this species of comparative anatomy he has, in several instances, detected the springs which direct and influence certain peculiarities of formation, the principle of which would have probably been hidden from one who had directed his attention solely to the study of the Anglo-Saxon language.

The limits within which we are necessarily limited prevent us from offering to our readers more than a very general outline of the work. We would, however, direct the attention of the student to the important light which Rask has thrown upon the principles of the language, by what he has advanced regarding accentuation. The darkness in which this radical organization of the Saxon has hitherto lain, is marvellous, the more especially when we notice its adoption in early manuscripts, and how essential a knowledge of it is towards a comprehension of the elements of the tongue. A pretty extensive examination of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, in which lie the proofs of the truth or the incorrectness of Mr. Rask's system, enables us to say that these manuscripts fully support the soundness of his views, and that the few instances of misapprehension and omission discoverable in his Grammar only leave the more room for us to wonder at their paucity. The division of nouns into simple and complex, of adjectives into definite and indefinite, are new to us in England; and the clearness of this arrangement forms an admirable contrast to the endless subdivisions, exceptions, and annotations, which perplex the unhappy wight who has been laboring under the guidance of Hickes. But it is in the investigation of the verbs that Rask appears to the greatest advantage, and his classification of them is simple and obvious: of its accuracy there cannot be a better proof than the order and perfect regularity which it enables us to discover in numerous formations previously considered as irregular. His observations upon prefixes and postfixes are written with less care than the previous portion of the Grammar, probably from his not considering the subject as one meriting a deeper discussion. The same excuse cannot be urged for the slighting manner in which he has treated another branch, — that of Syntax; in this part, although all the more prominent rules are exhibited, those more deeply hidden and nicer peculiarities, of which we cannot suppose him to be ignorant, are passed over without notice. This portion of the work, therefore, appears to great disadvantage when compared with the manner in which he has treated the verbs. The chapter upon the laws of Saxon poetry is excellent, and Rask displays a

decided superiority over the dogmas of Hickee, Conybeare, and W. Grimm. The volume concludes with a very good praxis, by the aid of which, and the other helps which this Grammar affords to the student, the labor of acquiring a tolerable knowledge of the language has been materially shortened and facilitated. It would be unjust to withhold our thanks from the gentleman who has conferred such a benefit upon English scholars as that of introducing to them, in an English dress, a publication upon which all subsequent investigations into the history and formation of the language of our forefathers must be mainly founded.

The preceding observations were committed to paper some months since: in the interval which has elapsed between their coming before us in types, the melancholy tidings have arrived that the distinguished author is now beyond the reach of our praise or censure, — Erasmus Rask is no more!

In the *Literary Intelligence* of the present number, under the head of Denmark, will be found such particulars of the life and literary labors of this remarkable scholar and linguist as we have been able to collect together.\*

[From "The Quarterly Review, No. 27."]

AN. VIII. — *Poems by Alfred Tennyson*. London. 1833. 12mo. pp. 163.

THIS is, as some of his marginal notes intimate, Mr. Tennyson's second appearance. By some strange chance we have never seen his first publication, which, if it at all resembles its younger brother, must be by this time so popular, that any notice of it on our part would seem idle and presumptuous; but we gladly seize this opportunity of repairing an unintentional neglect, and of introducing to the admiration of our more sequestered readers a new prodigy of genius, — another and a brighter star of that galaxy or *milky way* of poetry of which the lamented Keats was the harbinger; and let us take this occasion to sing our palinode on the subject of "Endymion." We certainly did not † discover in that poem the same degree of merit that its more clear-sighted and prophetic admirers did. We did not foresee the unbounded popularity which has carried it through we know not how many editions; which has placed it on every table; and, what is still more unequivocal, familiarized it in every mouth. All this splendor of fame, however, though we had not the sagacity to anticipate, we have

[\* This notice we have given in a following part of our number.]

† See "Quarterly Review," Vol. XIX. p. 204.

the candor to acknowledge; and we request that the publisher of the new and beautiful edition of Keats's works now in press, with graphic illustrations of Calcott and Turner, will do us the favor and the justice to notice our conversion in his prolegomena.

Warned by our former mishap, wiser by experience, and improved, as we hope, in taste, we have to offer Mr. Tennyson our tribute of unmingled approbation; and it is very agreeable to us, as well as to our readers, that our present task will be little more than the selection, for their delight, of a few specimens of Mr. Tennyson's singular genius, and the venturing to point out, now and then, the peculiar brilliancy of some of the gems that irradiate his poetical crown.

A prefatory sonnet opens to the reader the aspirations of the young author, in which, after the manner of sundry poets, ancient and modern, he expresses his own peculiar character, by wishing himself to be something that he is not. The amorous Catullus aspired to be a sparrow; the tuneful and convivial Anacreon (for we totally reject the supposition that attributes the ἑὶς λύρη καὶ ποτήριον to Alcæus) wished to be a lyre and a great drinking-cup; a crowd of more modern sentimentalists have desired to approach their mistresses as flowers, tunicks, sandals, birds, breezes, and butterflies; — all poor conceits of narrow-minded poetasters! Mr. Tennyson (though he, too, would, as far as his true-love is concerned, not unwillingly be “an earring,” “a girdle,” and “a necklace,” p. 45) in the more serious and solemn exordium of his works ambitions a bolder metamorphosis, — he wishes to be, — *a river!*

## SONNET.

“Mine be the strength of spirit fierce and free,  
Like some broad river rushing down *alone*,” —

rivers that travel in company are too common for his taste, —

“With the self-same impulse wherewith he was thrown,” —

a beautiful and harmonious line, —

“From his loud fount upon the echoing lea: —

Which, with *increasing* might, doth *forward flee*,” —

Every word of this line is valuable, — the natural progress of human ambition is here strongly characterized, — two lines ago he would have been satisfied with the *self-same* impulse, — but now he must have *increasing* might; and indeed he would require all his might to accomplish his object of *fleeing forward*, that is, going backwards and forwards at the same time. Perhaps he uses the word *flee* for *flow*; which latter he could not well employ in *this* place, it being, as we shall see, essentially necessary to rhyme to *Mexico* towards the end of the sonnet, — as an equivalent to *flow* he has, therefore, with great taste and ingenuity, hit on the combination of *forward flee*, —

——— "doth forward flee  
By town, and tower, and hill, and cape, and isle,  
And in the middle of the green salt sea  
Keeps his blue waters fresh for many a mile."

A noble wish, beautifully expressed, that he may not be confounded with the deluge of ordinary poets, but, amidst their discolored and briny ocean, still preserve his own bright tints and sweet savour. He may be at ease on this point, — he never can be mistaken for any one else. We have but too late become acquainted with him, yet we assure ourselves that if a thousand anonymous specimens were presented to us, we should unerringly distinguish his by the total absence of any particle of *salt*. But again, his thoughts take another turn, and he reverts to the insatiability of human ambition: — we have seen him just now content to be a river, but as he *flee*s forward, his desires expand into sublimity, and he wishes to become the great Gulf-stream of the Atlantic.

"Mine be the power which ever to its sway  
Will win the wise at once, —

We, for once, are wise, and he has won us, —

"Will win the wise at once; and by degrees  
May into uncongenial spirits flow,  
Even as the great Gulph-stream of Florida  
Floats far away into the Northern seas  
The lavish growths of southern Mexico!" — p. 1.

And so concludes the sonnet.

The next piece is a kind of testamentary paper, addressed "To —," a friend, we presume, containing his wishes as to what his friend should do for him when he (the poet) shall be dead, — not, as we shall see, that he quite thinks that such a poet can die outright.

"Shake hands, my friend, across the brink  
Of that deep grave to which I go.  
Shake hands once more; I cannot sink  
So far — far down, but I shall know  
Thy voice, and answer from below!"

Horace said "Non omnis moriar," meaning that his fame should survive, — Mr. Tennyson is still more vivacious, "Non *omnis* moriar," — "I will not die at all; my body shall be as immortal as my verse, and however *low I may go*, I warrant you I shall keep all my wits about me, — therefore

"When, in the darkness over me,  
The four-handed mole shall scrape,  
Plant thou no dusky cypress tree,  
Nor wreath thy cap with doleful crape,  
But pledge me in the flowing grape."

Observe how all ages become present to the mind of a great poet;

and admire how naturally he combines the funeral cypress of classical antiquity with the crape hatband of the modern undertaker.

He proceeds : —

“ And when the sappy field and wood  
Grow green beneath the *showery gray*,  
And rugged barks begin to bud,  
And through damp holts, newflushed with May,  
Ring sudden *laughters* of the jay ! ”

Laughter, the philosophers tell us, is the peculiar attribute of man, — but as Shakspeare found “ tongues in trees and sermons in stones,” this true poet endows all nature not merely with human sensibilities, but with human functions, — the jay *laughs*, and we find indeed, a little further on, that the woodpecker *laughs* also ; but to mark the distinction between their merriment and that of men, both jays and woodpeckers laugh upon melancholy occasions. We are glad, moreover, to observe, that Mr. Tennyson is prepared for, and therefore will not be disturbed by, human laughter, if any silly reader should catch the infection from the woodpeckers and jays.

“ Then let wise Nature work her will,  
And on my clay her darnels grow,  
Come only when the days are still,  
And at my head-stone whisper low,  
And tell me ” —

Now, what would an ordinary bard wish to be told under such circumstances ? — why, perhaps, how his sweetheart was, or his child, or his family, or how the Reform Bill worked, or whether the last edition of the poems had been sold, — *papa !* our genuine poet's first wish is

“ And tell me — *if the woodbines blow !* ”

When, indeed, he shall have been thus satisfied as to the *woodbines* (of the blowing of which in their due season he may, we think, feel pretty secure), he turns a passing thought to his friend, — and another to his mother, —

“ If thou art blest, my mother's smile  
Undimmed ” —

but such inquiries, short as they are, seem too common-place, and he immediately glides back into his curiosity as to the state of the weather and the forwardness of the spring, —

“ If thou art blessed, — my mother's smile  
Undimmed, — *if bees are on the wing ?* ”

No, we believe the whole circle of poetry does not furnish such another instance of enthusiasm for the sights and sounds of the vernal season ! — The sorrows of a bereaved mother rank *after* the blossoms of the *woodbine*, and just before the hummings of the *bee* ; and this is *all* that he has any curiosity about ; for he proceeds, —

"Then cease, my friend, a little while  
That I may" —

"send my love to my mother," or "give you some hints about  
bees, which I have picked up from Aristæus, in the Elysian Fields,"  
or "tell you how I am situated as to my own personal comforts in  
the world below" ? — oh no, —

"That I may — hear the throats sing  
His bridal song — the boast of spring.

Sweet as the noise, in parched plains,  
Of bubbling wells that fret the stones,  
(If any sense in me remains)

Thy words will be — thy cheerful tones  
As welcome to — my crumbling bones ! " — p. 4.

"If any sense in me remains ! " — This doubt is inconsistent with  
the opening stanza of the piece, and, in fact, too modest ; we  
take upon ourselves to reassure Mr. Tennyson, that, even after  
he shall be dead and buried, as much "sense" will still remain  
as he has now the good fortune to possess.

We have quoted these two first poems *in extenso*, to obviate any  
suspicion of our having made a partial or delusive selection. We  
cannot afford space, — we wish we could, — for an equally minute  
examination of the rest of the volume, but we shall make a few  
extracts to show, — what we solemnly affirm, — that every page  
teems with beauties hardly less surprising.

*The Lady of Shalott* is a poem in four parts, the story of which  
we decline to maim by such an analysis as we could give, but it  
opens thus, —

"On either side the river lie  
Long fields of barley and of rye,  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky ; —  
And through the field the road runs by."

The Lady of Shalott was, it seems, a spinster who had, under  
some unnamed penalty, a certain web to weave.

"Underneath the bearded barley,  
The reaper, reaping late and early,  
Hears her ever chanting cheerly,  
Like an angel singing clearly. . . . .

"No time has she to sport or play,  
A charmed web she weaves alway ;  
A curse is on her if she stay  
Her weaving either night or day. . . . .

"She knows not," —

Poor lady, nor we either, —

"She knows not what that curse may be,  
Therefore she weaveth steadily ;  
Therefore no other care has she,  
The Lady of Shalott."

A knight, however, happens to ride past her window, coming

—— “from Camelot ; \*  
From the bank, and *from* the river,  
He flashed *into* the crystal mirror, —  
‘Tirra lirra, tirra lirra,’ (*lirrar* ?)  
Sang Sir Launcelot.” — p. 15.

The lady stepped to the window to look at the stranger, and forgot for an instant her web : — the curse fell on her, and she died ; why, how, and wherefore, the following stanzas will clearly and pathetically explain : —

“ A long drawn carol, mournful, holy,  
She chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
Till her eyes were darkened *wholly*,  
And her smooth face *sharpened slowly*,  
Turned to towered Camelot.  
For ere she reached upon the tide  
The first house on the water side,  
Singing in her song she died,  
The Lady of Shalott !  
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
To the plankèd wharfage came ;  
Below the stern they read her name,  
The Lady of Shalott.” — p. 19.

We pass by two, — what shall we call them ? — tales, or odes, or sketches, entitled “ Mariana in the South ” and “ Eleānore,” of which we fear we could make no intelligible extract, so curiously are they run together into one dreamy tissue, — to a little novel in rhyme, called “ The Miller’s Daughter.” Miller’s daughters, poor things, have been so generally betrayed by their sweethearts, that it is refreshing to find that Mr. Tennyson has united himself to his miller’s daughter in lawful wedlock, and the poem is a history of his courtship and wedding. He begins with a sketch of his own birth, parentage, and personal appearance, —

“ My father’s mansion, mounted high,  
Looked down upon the village-spire ;  
I was a long and listless boy,  
And son and heir unto the ‘Squire.’ ”

But the son and heir of Squire Tennyson often descended from the “ mansion mounted high ” ; and

“ I met in all the close green ways,  
While walking with my line and rod,”

A metonymy for “ rod and line,” —

“ The wealthy miller’s mealy face,  
Like the moon in an ivy-tod.

\* The same Camelot, in Somersetshire, we presume, which is alluded to by Kent in “ King Lear,” —

“ Goose ! if I had thee upon Sarum plain,  
I ’d drive thee cackling home to Camelot.”

"He looked so jolly and so good,—  
While fishing in the mill-dam water,  
I laughed to see him as he stood,  
And dreamt not of the miller's daughter."—p. 33.

He, however, soon saw, and, need we add, loved the miller's daughter, whose countenance, we presume, bore no great resemblance either to the "mealy face" of the miller, or "the moon in an ivy-tod;" and we think our readers will be delighted at the way in which the impassioned husband relates to his wife how his fancy mingled enthusiasm for rural sights and sounds, with a prospect of the less romantic scene of her father's occupation.

"How dear to me in youth, my love,  
Was every thing about the mill;  
The black, the silent pool above,  
The pool beneath that ne'er stood still;  
The meal-sacks on the whitened floor,  
The dark round of the dripping wheel,  
The very air about the door,  
Made misty with the floating meal!"—p. 35.

The accumulation of tender images in the following lines appears not less wonderful:—

"Remember you that pleasant day  
When, after roving in the woods,  
(T was April then) I came and lay  
Beneath those gummy chesnut-buds?  
"A water-rat from off the bank  
Plunged in the stream. With idle care,  
Downlooking through the sedges rank,  
I saw your troubled image there.  
"If you remember, you had set,  
Upon the narrow casement-edge,  
A long green box of mignonette,  
And you were leaning on the ledge."

The poet's truth to Nature in his "gummy" chesnut-buds, and to Art in the "long green box" of mignonette,—and that masterly touch of likening the first intrusion of love into the virgin bosom of the Miller's daughter to the plunging of a water-rat into the mill-dam,—these are beauties which, we do not fear to say, equal any thing even in Keats.

We pass by several songs, sonnets, and small pieces, all of singular merit, to arrive at a class, we may call them, of three poems derived from mythological sources,—*Enone*, the *Hesperides*, and the *Lotos-eaters*. But though the subjects are derived from classical antiquity, Mr. Tennyson treats them with so much originality that he makes them exclusively his own. *Enone*, deserted by

"Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,"

sings a kind of dying soliloquy addressed to Mount *Ida*, in a formula which is sixteen times repeated in this short poem.

"Dear mother *Ida*, hearken ere I die."

She tells her "dear mother Ida," that when evil-hearted Paris was about to judge between the three goddesses, he hid her (CEnone) behind a rock, whence she had a full view of the *naked* beauties of the rivals, which broke her heart.

"*Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die: —*

It was the deep mid noon: one silvery cloud  
Had *lost his way* among the pined hills:  
They came, — *all three*, — the Olympian goddesses.  
Naked they came, —

How beautiful they were! too beautiful  
To look upon; but Paris was to me  
*More lovelier* than all the world beside.  
*O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.*" — p. 56.

In the place where we have indicated a pause, follows a description, long, rich, and luscious, — Of the three naked goddesses? Fye for shame, — no, — of the "lily flower violet-eyed," and the "singing pine," and the "overwandering ivy and vine," and "festoons," and "gnarlèd boughs," and "tree-tops," and "berries," and "flowers," and all the *inanimate* beauties of the scene. It would be unjust to the *ingenuus pudor* of the author not to observe the art with which he has veiled this ticklish interview behind such luxuriant trellis-work, and it is obvious that it is for our special sakes he has entered into these local details, because if there was one thing which "mother Ida" knew better than another, it must have been her own bushes and brakes. We then have in detail the tempting speeches of, first, —

"The imperial Olympian,  
With archèd eyebrow smiling sovrانly,  
Full-eyed Here;"

secondly of Pallas —

"Her clear and barèd limbs  
O'er-thwarted with the brazen-headed spear,"

and thirdly —

"Idalian Aphrodite ocean-born,  
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells," —

for one dip, or even three dips in one well, would not have been enough on such an occasion, — and her succinct and prevailing promise of —

"The fairest and most loving wife in Greece;" —

upon evil-hearted Paris's catching at which prize, the tender and chaste CEnone exclaims her indignation, that she herself should not be considered fair enough, since only yesterday her charms had struck awe into —

"a wild and wanton pard,  
Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail, —"

and proceeds in this anti-Martineau rapture, —

"Most loving is she?"

"Ah me! my mountain shepherd, that my arms  
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips prest  
Close,—close to thine in that quick falling dew  
Of fruitful kisses.  
Dear mother Ida! hearken ere I die!"—p. 62.

After such reiterated assurances that she was about to die on the spot, it appears that CEnone thought better of it, and the poem concludes with her taking the wiser course of going to town to consult her swain's sister, Cassandra, — whose advice, we presume, prevailed upon her to live, as we can, from other sources, assure our readers she did to a good old age.

In the "Hesperides" our author, with great judgment, rejects the common fable, which attributes to Hercules the slaying of the dragon and the plunder of the golden fruit. Nay, he supposes them to have existed to a comparatively recent period, — namely, the voyage of Hanno, on the coarse canvass of whose log-book Mr. Tennyson has judiciously embroidered the Hesperian romance. The poem opens with a geographical description of the neighbourhood, which must be very clear and satisfactory to the English reader; indeed, it leaves far behind in accuracy of topography and melody of rhythm the heroics of Dionysius *Periegetes*.

"The north wind fall'n, in the new-starrèd night."

Here we must pause to observe a new species of *metabolé* with which Mr. Tennyson has enriched our language. He suppresses the *e im fallen*, where it is usually written and where it must be pronounced, and transfers it to the word *new-starrèd*, where it would not be pronounced if he did not take due care to superfix a *grave* accent. This use of the grave accent is, as our readers may have already perceived, so habitual with Mr. Tennyson, and is so obvious an improvement, that we really wonder how the language has hitherto done without it. We are tempted to suggest, that if analogy to the accented languages is to be thought of, it is rather the acute (´) than the grave (`) which should be employed on such occasions; but we speak with profound diffidence; and as Mr. Tennyson is the inventor of the system, we shall bow with respect to whatever his final determination may be.

"The north wind fall'n, in the new-starrèd night  
Zidonian Hanno, voyaging beyond  
The hoary promontory of Saloe,  
Past Thymiatæron in calmed bays."

We must here note specially the musical flow of this last line, which is the more creditable to Mr. Tennyson, because it was before the tuneless names of this very neighbourhood that the learned continuator of Dionysius retreated in despair, —

——— Ἰσωνυμίας οὐ ἑλλαχὺν ἔλλατ  
Αἰδέσσαι γαῖαν, δυσφύουσι οὐδ' ἱσπερὺς  
Μούσαις, οὐκ ἔστιν ἔγχε' οὐκ ἀγορεύουσιν ἀσάπας.

but Mr. Tennyson is bolder and happier, —

“Past Thymiaterion in calmèd bays,  
Between the southern and the western Horn,  
Heard neither,” —

We pause for a moment to consider what a sea-captain might have expected to hear, by night, in the Atlantic ocean; — he heard

—— “neither the warbling of the *nightingale* ●  
Nor melody o’ the Libyan lotusflute,”

but he did hear the three daughters of Hesper singing the following song: —

“The golden apple, the golden apple, the hallowèd fruit,  
Guard it well, guard it warily,  
Singing airily,  
Standing about the charmèd root,  
Round about all is mute,” ——

*mute*, though they sung so loud as to be heard some leagues out at sea, —

————— “all is mute  
As the snow-field on mountain peaks,  
As the sand-field at the mountain foot,  
Crocodiles in briny creeks  
Sleep, and stir not: all is mute.”

How admirably do these lines describe the peculiarities of this charmèd neighbourhood, — fields of snow, so talkative when they happen to lie at the foot of the mountain, are quite out of breath when they get to the top, and the sand, so noisy on the summit of a hill, is dumb at its foot. The very crocodiles, too, are *mute*, — not dumb but *mute*. The “red-combèd dragon curl’d,” is next introduced, —

“Look to him, father, lest he wink, and the golden apple be stolen away,  
For his ancient heart is drunk with overwatchings night and day,  
Sing away, sing aloud evermore, in the wind without stop.”

The north wind, it appears, had by this time awaked again, —

“Lest his scaled eyelid drop,  
For he is older than the world” ——

older than the *hills*, besides not rhyming to “curl’d,” would hardly have been a sufficiently venerable phrase for this most harmonious of lyrics. It proceeds, —

“If ye sing not, if ye make false measure,  
We shall lose eternal pleasure,  
Worth eternal want of rest.  
Laugh not loudly: watch the treasure  
Of the wisdom of the west.  
In a corner wisdom whispers. Five and three  
(*Let it not be preached abroad*) make an awful mystery.” — p. 102.

This recipe for keeping a secret, by singing it so loud as to be

heard for miles, is almost the only point, in all Mr. Tennyson's poems, in which we can trace the remotest approach to any thing like what other men have written, but it certainly does remind us of the "chorus of conspirators" in the *Rovers*.

Hanno, however, who understood no language but Punic, — (the *Hesperides* sang, we presume, either in Greek or in English), — appears to have kept on his way without taking any notice of the song, for the poem concludes, —

"The apple of gold hangs over the sea,  
Five links, a golden chain, are we,  
Hesper, the Dragon, and sisters three;  
Daughters three,  
Bound about  
All round about  
The gnarled bole of the charmed tree,  
The golden apple, the golden apple, the hallowed fruit.  
Guard it well, guard it warily,  
Watch it warily,  
Singing airily,  
Standing about the charmed root." — p. 107.

We hardly think that, if Hanno had translated it into Punic, the song would have been more intelligible.

The "Lotuseaters," — a kind of classical opium-eaters, — are Ulysses and his crew. They land on the "charmed island," and eat of the "charmed root," and then they sing, —

"Long enough the winedark wave our weary bark did carry.  
This is lovelier and sweeter,  
Men of Ithaca, this is meeter,  
In the hollow rosy vale to tarry,  
Like a dreamy Lotuseater, — a delicious Lotuseater!  
We will eat the Lotus, sweet  
As the yellow honeycomb;  
In the valley some, and some  
On the ancient heights divine,  
And no more roam,  
On the loud hoar foam,  
To the melancholy home,  
At the limits of the brine,  
The little isle of Ithaca, beneath the day's decline." — p. 116.

Our readers will, we think, agree that this is admirably characteristic, and that the singers of this song must have made pretty free with the intoxicating fruit. How they got home you must read in *Homer*: — Mr. Tennyson, — himself, we presume, a dreamy lotus-eater, a delicious lotus-eater, — leaves them in full song.

Next comes another class of poems, — *Visions*. The first is the "Palace of Art," or a fine house, in which the poet *dreams* that he sees a very fine collection of well-known pictures. An ordinary versifier would, no doubt, have followed the old routine, and dully described himself as walking into the Louvre, or Buckingham Palace, and there seeing certain masterpieces of painting: — a

true poet dreams it. We have not room to hang many of these *chefs-d'œuvre*, but for a few we must find space. — "The Madonna," —

"The maid mother by a crucifix,  
In yellow pastures sunny warm,  
Beneath branch work of costly sardonyx  
Sat smiling, — *babe in arm.*" — p. 72.

The use of this latter, apparently, colloquial phrase is a deep stroke of art. The form of expression is always used to express an habitual and characteristic action. A knight is described "*lance in rest*," — a dragoon, "*sword in hand*," — so, as the idea of the Virgin is inseparably connected with her child, Mr. Tennyson reverently describes her conventional position, — "*babe in arm.*"

His gallery of illustrious portraits is thus admirably arranged : — The Madonna, — Ganymede, — St Cecilia, — Europa, — Deep-haired Milton, — Shakspeare, — Grim Dante, — Michael Angelo, — Luther, — Lord Bacon, — Cervantes, — Calderon, — King David, — "the Halicarnassean" (*quare*, which of them?) — Alfred, (not Alfred Tennyson, though no doubt in any other man's gallery *he* would have had a place) and finally, —

"Isaiah, with fierce Ezekiel,  
Swarth Moses by the Coptic sea,  
Plato, *Petrarca*, *Livy*, and *Raphael*,  
And eastern Confutzee!"

We can hardly suspect the very original mind of Mr. Tennyson to have harboured any recollections of that celebrated Doric idyll, "The groves of Blarney," but certainly there is a strong likeness between Mr. Tennyson's list of pictures and the Blarney collection of statues, —

"Statues growing that noble place in,  
All heathen goddesses most rare,  
Homer, *Plutarch*, and *Nebuchadnezzar*,  
All standing naked in the open air!"

In this poem we first observed a stroke of art (repeated afterwards) which we think very ingenious. No one who has ever written verse but must have felt the pain of erasing some happy line, some striking stanza, which, however excellent in itself, did not exactly suit the place for which it was destined. How curiously does an author mould and remould the plastic verse in order to fit in the favorite thought; and when he finds that he cannot introduce it, as Corporal Trim says, *any how*, with what reluctance does he at last reject the intractable, but still cherished offspring of his brain! Mr. Tennyson manages this delicate matter in a new and better way; he says, with great candor and simplicity, "If this poem were not already too long, *I should have added the following stanzas*," and then he adds them, (p. 64 :) — or, "the following lines are manifestly superfluous, as a part of

the text, but they may be allowed to stand as a separate poem," (p. 121,) *which they do*; — or, "I intended to have added something on statuary, but I found it very difficult;" — (he had, moreover, as we have seen, been anticipated in this line by the Blarney poet), — "but I had finished the statues of *Elijah* and *Olympias*, — judge whether I have succeeded," (p. 73,) — and then we have these two statues. This is certainly the most ingenious device that has ever come under our observation, for reconciling the rigor of criticism with the indulgence of parental partiality. It is economical too, and to the reader profitable, as by these means

"We lose no drop of the immortal man."

The other vision is "A Dream of Fair Women," in which the heroines of all ages, — some, indeed, that belong to the times of "heathen goddesses most rare," — pass before his view. We have not time to notice them all, but the second, whom we take to be Iphigenia, touches the heart with a stroke of nature more powerful than even the veil that the Grecian painter threw over the head of her father.

———"Dimly I could descry  
The stern blackbearded kings with wolfish eyes,  
Watching to see me die.  
The tall masts quivered as they lay afloat;  
The temples, and the people, and the shore;  
One drew a sharp knife through my tender throat, —  
Slowly — and nothing more!"

What touching simplicity, — what pathetic resignation, — he cut my throat, — "nothing more!" One might indeed ask, "what more" she would have?

But we must hasten on; and to tranquillize the reader's mind after the last affecting scene, shall notice the only two pieces of a lighter strain which the volume affords. The first is elegant and playful, it is a description of the author's study, which he affectionately calls his *Darling Room*.

"O darling room, my heart's delight;  
Dear room, the apple of my sight;  
With thy two couches, soft and white,  
There is no room so exquisite;  
No little room so warm and bright,  
Wherein to read, wherein to write."

We entreat our readers to note how, even in this little trifle, the singular taste and genius of Mr. Tennyson break forth. In such a dear *little* room a narrow-minded scribbler would have been content with *one* sofa, and that one he would probably have covered with black mohair, or red cloth, or a good striped chintz; how infinitely more characteristic is white dumity! — 't is as it were a type of the purity of the poet's mind. He proceeds, —

“For I the Nonnenwerth have seen,  
 And Oberwinter’s vineyards green,  
 Musical Lurlei ; and between  
 The hills to Bingen I have been,  
 Bingen in Darmstadt, where the *Rhene*  
 Curves towards Mentz, a woody scene.

Yet never did there meet my sight,  
 In any town, to left or right,  
 A little room so exquisite,  
 With *two* such couches soft and white ;  
 Not any room so warm and bright,  
 Wherein to read, wherein to write.” — p. 153.

A common poet would have said that he had been in London, or in Paris, — in the loveliest villa on the banks of the Thames, or the most gorgeous chateau on the Loire, — that he had reclined in Madame de Staël’s boudoir, and mused in Mr. Rogers’s comfortable study ; but the *darling room* of the poet of nature (which we must suppose to be endued with sensibility, or he would not have addressed it) would not be flattered with such common-place comparisons ; — no, no, but it is something to have it said that there is no such room in the ruins of the Drachenfels, in the vineyards of Oberwinter, or even in the rapids of the *Rhene*, under the Lurleyberg. We have ourselves visited all these celebrated spots, and can testify, in corroboration of Mr. Tennyson, that we did not see in any of them any thing like *this little room so exquisite*.

The second of the lighter pieces, and the last, with which we shall delight our readers, is a severe retaliation on the editor of “The Edinburgh Magazine,” who, it seems, had not treated the first volume of Mr. Tennyson with the same respect that we have, we trust, evinced for the second.

“TO CHRISTOPHER NORTH.

You did late review my lays,  
 Crusty Christopher ;  
 You did mingle blame and praise,  
 Rusty Christopher.

When I learnt from whom it came  
 I forgave you all the blame,  
 Rusty Christopher ;  
 I could not forgive the praise,  
 Fusty Christopher.” — p. 153.

Was there ever any thing so genteelly turned, — so terse, — so sharp, — and the point so stinging and so true ?

“I could not forgive the *praise*,  
 Fusty Christopher !”

This leads us to observe on a phenomenon which we have frequently seen, but never been able to explain. It has been occasionally our painful lot to excite the displeasure of authors whom we have reviewed, and who have vented their dissatisfaction, some in prose, some in verse, and some in what we could not

distinctly say whether it was verse or prose; but we have invariably found that the common formula of retort was that adopted by Mr. Tennyson against his northern critic, namely, that the author would always

— forgive us all the *blame*,  
But could not forgive the *praise*.

Now this seems very surprising. It has sometimes, though we regret to say rarely, happened, that, as in the present instance, we have been able to deal out unqualified praise, but we never found that the dose in this case disagreed with the most squeamish stomach! on the contrary, the patient has always seemed exceedingly comfortable after he had swallowed it. He has been known to take the "Review" home and keep his wife from a ball, and his children from bed, till he could administer it to them, by reading the article aloud. He has even been heard to recommend the "Review" to his acquaintance at the clubs, as the best number which has yet appeared, and one, who happened to be an M. P. as well as an author, gave a *conditional* order, that in case his last work should be favorably noticed, a dozen copies should be sent down by the mail to the borough of —. But, on the other hand, when it has happened that the general course of our criticism has been unfavorable, if by accident we happened to introduce the smallest spice of *praise*, the patient immediately fell into paroxysms, — declaring that the part which we foolishly thought might offend him, had, on the contrary, given him pleasure, — positive pleasure, but *that* which he could not possibly either forget or forgive, was the grain of praise, be it ever so small, which we had dropped in, and for which, and *not for our censure*, he felt constrained, in honor and conscience, to visit us with his extreme indignation. Can any reader or writer inform us how it is that praise in the wholesale is so very agreeable to the very same stomach that rejects it with disgust and loathing, when it is scantily administered; and above all, can they tell us why it is, that the indignation and nausea should be in the exact inverse ratio to the quantity of the ingredient? These effects, of which we could quote several cases much more violent than Mr. Tennyson's, puzzle us exceedingly; but a learned friend, whom we have consulted, has, though he could not account for the phenomenon, pointed out what he thought an analogous case. It is related of Mr. Alderman Faulkener, of convivial memory, that one night when he expected his guests to sit late and try the strength of his claret and his head, he took the precaution of placing in his wine-glass a strawberry, which his doctor, he said, had recommended to him on account of its cooling qualities: on the faith of this specific, he drank even more deeply, and, as might be expected, was carried away at an earlier period and in rather a worse state, than was usual with him. When some of his friends condoled with him next day, and attributed his misfortune to six bottles of claret which he had imbibed, the Alderman was ex-

trremely indignant,—"the claret," he said, "was sound, and never could do any man any harm,—his discomfiture was altogether caused by that damned single strawberry" which he had kept all night at the bottom of his glass.

### NOTICES OF EMINENT INDIVIDUALS LATELY DECEASED.

[From "The Foreign Quarterly Review, No. 20."]

FRANCIS HUBER.\*

EVERY thing which suggests the idea of difficulties overcome, generally flatters the imagination. The least adventurous and the least inventive are delighted to see, by examples, in what manner the corporeal or intellectual power of their fellow-creatures has been able to vanquish obstacles to all appearance insurmountable; and it is this feeling which gave rise to all the wonderful tales of the heroes of ancient times. Persons who are more accustomed to reflection take a pleasure in following these examples into their details, and in studying the process by which some ingenious minds have been able to surmount difficulties, or to turn them aside. If the effects are of short duration, we admire them as mere meteors; but if the obstacle is permanent, and the efforts to surmount it are corresponding, the admiration which we felt for the sudden development of momentary energy is converted into one still deeper for that continued force, and that patient and unshaken determination, which fall to the lot of so few individuals. Such examples should be placed on record for the honor of human kind, and for the encouragement of all whom the contemplation of difficulties might be apt to divert from their object. Perhaps these reflections, far-fetched as they may at first appear to be, will receive some confirmation from the history of the individual to whom this notice is consecrated.

Francis Huber was born at Geneva in July, 1750, of an honorable family, in which quickness of intellect and a lively imagination seemed hereditary. His father, John Huber, had the reputation of being one of the wittiest men of his time, and in this light is often mentioned by Voltaire, who highly appreciated his original conversation. He was an agreeable musician,—wrote verses

\* For this sketch, which first appeared in the *Bibliothèque Universelle* of Geneva, we are indebted to the able pen of M. de Candolle. It would form a most interesting additional chapter to the clever little work entitled, "The Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties," published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

which were praised even at Ferney, — was distinguished by his keen and lively repartees, — painted with ease and talent, — excelled to such a degree in cutting out landscapes, as almost to entitle him to be considered the creator of the art, — practised sculpture better than almost ever falls to the lot of a mere amateur ; \* and to these varied talents he united a taste for, and the art of, observing the manners of animals. His work on the flight of birds of prey is even yet consulted with advantage by naturalists. The tastes of the father, the son inherited almost entire. In his early years he attended the public lectures of the college, and, under the guidance of good masters, acquired a taste for literature, which was developed by the conversation of his father ; to this paternal inspiration he was also indebted for his love of natural history ; he was initiated in the physical sciences by attending the lectures of M. de Saussure, and by making experiments in the laboratory of a relative, who ruined himself in the search for the philosopher's stone. Endowed with great warmth of feeling, his precocity was very remarkable ; he commenced the study of nature at an age when others are scarcely conscious of its existence, and his passions were strong at a period when those of others scarcely rise to simple emotions. It would seem that as he was shortly destined to suffer the most grievous of all privations, he, as if instinctively, laid up a store of recollections and feelings for the remainder of his life. About the age of fifteen his general health and the state of his eye-sight began to change ; the ardor with which he had pursued his occupations and amusements, and the passionate attachment with which he followed his studies by day and the reading of romances by night, — when sometimes the deprivation of a feeble light made him have recourse to the light of the moon, — were the causes, it is said, which threatened the ruin both of his sight and constitution. His father, at that period, took him to Paris, in order to consult Tronchin on his health and Wenzel on the state of his eyes. Tronchin, with the view of preventing marasmus, sent him to pass some time at Stain, a village in the environs of Paris, in order to be out of the reach of every species of agitation : there he lived the life of a mere peasant, led the plough, and occupied himself wholly in agricultural pursuits. This plan was completely successful so far as regarded his general health, which was ever afterwards unshaken, while he acquired a taste for the country, and a tender recollection of its pleasures, which never forsook him. The oculist, Wenzel, considered the state of his sight as incurable ; he thought it unsafe to risk the operation for the cataract, which was then not so well understood as it is now, and even announced to Huber the probability of his shortly becoming completely blind. His eyes, however, in spite

\* An instance of his talent in this way has been preserved ; holding out a piece of bread to his dog, and making him bite it in all directions, he produced from it a bust of Voltaire of the most striking resemblance.





# of the World.

And with an apprehension  
Her timid pulses stir  
Of just such a fine springal  
As lives next door to her.

He watches the dull raindrops  
Drenching the misty land;  
His soul sighs for another  
Soul, similarly planned,  
That might from its own yearning  
His yearnings understand.

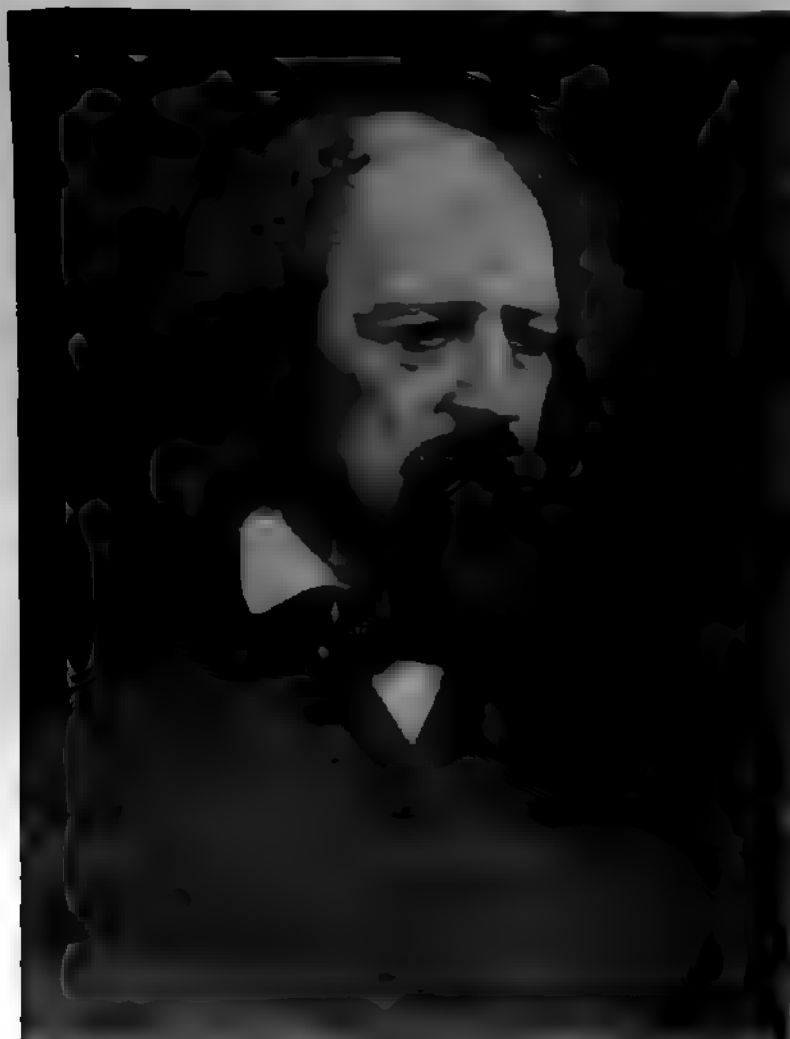
And his lone spirit wanders  
'Mid fancies soft and dim  
Of just such a young person  
As lives next door to him.

So near that if they listened  
Each might hear the other  
sigh;  
So near they might touch fingers  
If they knew but to try, —

If they might meet, what rapture!  
But it can never be:  
It shines—and he retires;  
It rains—and in goes she



From advance sheets  
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ALFRED LORD TENNYSON, 1866.

## TENNYSON'S FRIENDSHIPS.

By EDWIN C. MARTIN.



**W**HAT gives Lord Tennyson's writings an especial hold on the public regard is their sensitiveness, their responsiveness, to the spirit and movement of the times. In the early days, while the force and direction of Tennyson's career were still a little open to question, Edward Fitzgerald wrote to a friend who was disposed to doubt Tennyson's gift of "helpfulness:" "When he has *felt* life, you will see him acquire all that at present you miss; he will not die fruitless of instruction as he is." The prediction was verified almost before it was ventured. Whatever of more than momentary

# TENNYSON'S FRIENDSHIPS



LADY ELYS. FROM THE PORTRAIT BY G. F. WALES, R.A.

importance the world about him was doing, or thinking, or saying, got expression in his verse. Thus his poems are, in a sense, a history of the spiritual and intellectual progress of England from the first to the last quarter of the century; and people resort to them as to a hand-book or a monitor for suggestion and direction in perplexities of the very hour. The instructive quality, in fact, came finally to emphasize itself to such a degree that the later objection to Tennyson was exactly the opposite of that which Fitzgerald had confuted in his correspondent in the early

days. With reference to the play of "The Promise of May," this objection was urged so strenuously that it forced from Tennyson what very rarely in all his long life he had deigned to give—a word of defence; and he wrote to a friend: "The British drama must be in a low state if, indeed it, as certain dramatic critics have lately told us, none of the great moral and social questions of the time ought to be touched upon in a modern play."

This timeliness is the more remarkable in Tennyson, because in his private life no man ever held himself





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 JULIA SARAH ABBOT. FROM THE PORTRAIT BY G. F. WAITS, R.A.

hospitalities practised at Larringford and Aldworth, a little absurd to speak of Tennyson's privacy. Thus his position with reference to the proceedings of the world was like that of the newspaper editor who has his "private wire," save that he didn't boast of it in his columns. He learned of the great deeds that were doing, from the very lips of the doers.

Along with its incalculable obligation to Tennyson, the world has, therefore, some obligation to his friends. It has some obligation to them on two accounts: not only that they kept Tennyson well informed of it, but also that they have kept it, in its turn,

well informed of him. For here is a second oddity in the history of Tennyson: the man who was at most pains to keep hidden from observation is better known to us in his personality and his mode of life than almost any other of his time. The professed reporters were rigorously, nay, roughly, beaten off; the official biographer has not yet borne his voluminous pack to our doors; and, nevertheless, we already know, down to the last button, how Tennyson dressed; down to the last wick and candle how he slept and ate; down to the last acre it how he read and talked. I can think of men who would pay right handsomely to



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THOMAS CARLYLE

get the twentieth part of as much in print regarding their own private lives as is already in print regarding Tennyson's. And for most of this personal gossip our thanks are due alone to Lord Tennyson's friends. I, for one, pay mine here, and gladly recognize the favor. Because of a few recent excesses, both in ministration and indulgence, a stridently virtuous tone is just now sounding over the unfolding of the ordinary life of extraordinary people. But it is an entirely visionary day when men will cease to care to know how near or far from like their own the ordinary life of the extraordinary is; and at least every reading man must have found by his own experience that such a curiosity, kept within anything like reason, is altogether wholesome. Emerson was no trifle. "Be sure, then, to read no mean books,"

was his caution. Yet he recommended, and himself made great use of, certain autobiographies and books of table-talk. No more a trifle was George Eliot, who shared with Emerson a predilection for the "Confessions" of Rousseau.

Not only did Tennyson's friends thwart his purpose to shut out the reporter, but they went farther, and uncapped the camera upon him. There is just come from the press a regal book\* of portraits—some twenty-five in all, of himself and of the choicest of his betrayers to the world—most of the negatives for which were made by

\* London: T. Fisher Unwin. The edition is limited to four hundred copies, only one hundred and fifty of which are for sale in the United States. Messrs Macmillan & Co. are the American agents. In the book the portraits are introduced by Mrs. Anne Thackeray Ritchie with that delicacy and warm-heartedness with which she always writes of whomever in the nobility of letters it has been her high lot to know.









Tha Kenny



## ART. II.—THACKERAY'S WORKS.

1. *The Paris Sketch Book.* By Michael Angelo Titmarsh. 2 vols.
2. *Comic Tales and Sketches.* By M. A. Titmarsh. 2 vols. 1841.
3. *The Irish Sketch Book.* By M. A. Titmarsh. 2 vols. 1843.
4. *Vanity Fair.* 2 vols. 1848.
5. *Pendennis.* 2 vols. 1850.
6. *The Book of Snobs.* 1848.
7. *The History of Henry Esmond, Esq. Written by Himself.* 3 vols. 1852.

FIVE years ago, in dedicating the second edition of “Jane Eyre” to the author of “Vanity Fair,” Currer Bell spoke of him thus:—“Why have I alluded to this man? I have alluded to him, reader, because I think I see in him an intellect profounder and more unique than his contemporaries have yet recognised; because I regard him as the first social regenerator of the day—as the very master of that working corps who would restore to rectitude the warped system of things; because, I think no commentator on his writings has yet found the comparison that suits him, the terms which rightly characterize his talent. They say he is like Fielding; they talk of his wit, humour, comic powers. He resembles Fielding as an eagle does a vulture; Fielding could stoop on carrion, but Thackeray never does. His wit is bright, his humour attractive, but both bear the same relation to his serious genius, that the mere lambent sheet-lightning, playing under the edge of the summer-cloud, does to the electric death-spark hid in its womb.” When this was written, Mr. Thackeray was not the popular favourite he has since become. He counts readers now by hundreds, where then he only counted tens. In those days, Currer Bell’s panegyric was pronounced extravagant by many who now, if they do not echo, will at least scarcely venture to dispute it; but it may be doubted whether, up to the present time, full justice has been done by any of Mr. Thackeray’s critics to the peculiar genius of the man, or to the purpose with which his later books have been written. It is not, indeed, to the Press that he owes the appreciation which it is probable he values most. Its praise has generally been coupled with censure for what has occupied his most deliberate thought, and been con-

ceived with the most earnest purpose. While it has extolled his wit, his keen eye, his graphic style, his trenchant sarcasm, his power of exposing cant and Pharisaism in all its phases, it has, at the same time, been loud in its outcry against the writer's cynicism and want of faith, the absence of heroism and elevation in his characters—the foibles of all his women, the vices of all his men. Enough, and more than enough, has been said and written upon these points; but among a large section of his readers it has long been felt, that it may not have been without a purpose that Mr. Thackeray has never endowed his characters with ostentatious heroic virtues, or dwelt much on the brighter aspects of humanity; that his most unsparing ridicule, and his most pungent delineations of human folly or vice, are not tinged by the sour humours of the cynic or misanthrope, but that, through his harshest tones, there may be heard the sweet under-notes of a nature kindly and loving, and a heart warm and unspoiled, full of sympathy for goodness and all simple worth, and of reverence for all unaffected greatness.

Not many years ago, when reputations which are now effete were at their zenith, a pen was busy in our periodical literature, in which the presence of a power was felt by those who watched that literature, which seemed only to want happier circumstances to develop into forms worthy of a permanent place among English classics. Under many patronymics, its graphic sketches and original views were ushered into the world. The immortal Yellowplush, the James de-la-Pluche of a later date, the vivacious George Fitzboodle, the versatile Michael Angelo Titmarsh, were names well-known and prized within a limited circle. In Mr. Thackeray's lucubrations under all these pseudonyms, there was a freshness and force, a truthfulness of touch, a shrewdness of perception, and a freedom from conventionalism, whether in thought or expression, which argued in their originator something more akin to genius than to mere talent. Here was a man who looked below the surface of things, taking nothing for granted, and shrinking from no scrutiny of human motives, however painful; who saw clearly and felt deeply, and who spoke out his thought manfully and well. In an age of pretence, he had the courage to be simple. To strip sentimentalism of its frippery, pretension of its tinsel, vanity of its masks, and humbug literary and social of its disguises, appeared to be the vocation of this graphic satirist. The time gave him work to do in abundance, and manifestly neither skill nor will were wanting in him for the task. Best of all, he did not look down upon his fellow-men from those heights of contempt and scorn, which make satirists commonly the most hateful as well as the most profitless of writers. The hand that was mailed to

smite had an inward side soft to caress. He claimed no superiority, arrogated for himself no peculiar exemption from the vices and follies he satirized; he had his own mind to clear of cant as well as his neighbours', and professed to know their weak side only through a consciousness of his own. Just as he proclaimed himself as Mr. Snob, *par excellence*, when writing of the universal snobbishness of society at a later date, so in the "Confessions of Fitzboodle," or "The Yellowplush Papers," he made no parade of being one whit wiser, purer, or more disinterested than other people. Relentless to foppery, falsehood, and rascality, however ingeniously smoothed over or concealed, he was not prone to sneer at frailty, where it laid no claim to strength, or folly where it made no pretence of wisdom. The vices of our modern social life were the standing marks for the shafts of his ridicule, but here and there, across his pages, there shot gleams of a more pleasing light, which showed how eagerly the lynx-eyed observer hailed the presence of goodness, and candour, and generosity, whenever they crossed his path.

That he may, in those days, have thought them rarer than his subsequent experience has proved, is more than probable; and, indeed, this circumstance gave to many of his earlier sketches a depth of shade, which leaves an impression on the mind all the more painful, from the terrible force with which the tints are dashed in. No man ever sketched the varieties of scoundrelism or folly with more force than Yellowplush or Fitzboodle, but we cannot move long among fools and scoundrels without disgust. In these sketches, the shadows of life are too little relieved for them to be either altogether true to nature, or tolerable as works of art. We use them as studies of character, but, this purpose served, are fain to put them aside for ever after. Hence, no doubt, it was that these vigorous sketches, at the time they appeared, missed the popularity which was being won by far inferior works; and hence, too, they will never become popular even among those whom Mr. Thackeray's subsequent writings have made his warmest admirers. Bring them to the touchstone whose test all delineations of life must bear, to be worthy of lasting repute,—the approval of a woman's mind and taste,—and they are at once found to fail. Men will read them, and smile or ponder as they read, and, it may be, reap lessons useful for after needs; but a woman lays down the book, feeling that it deals with characters and situations, real perhaps, but which she can gain nothing by contemplating. No word, image, or suggestion, indeed, is there to offend her modesty—for, in this respect, Mr. Thackeray in all his writings has shown that reverence for womanhood and youth, which satirists have not often maintained;—but just as there are many things in life which it is

best not to know, so in these pictures of tainted humanity there is much to startle the faith, and to disquiet the fancy, without being atoned for by any commensurate advantage. With what admirable force, for example, are all the characters etched in Yellowplush's "Amours of Mr. Deuceace"! The Hon. Algernon Percy Deuceace himself,—his amiable father, the Earl of Crabs,—Mr. Blewitt,—where in literature shall we find such a trio of scoundrels, so distinct in their outlines, so unmistakeably true in all their tints? How perfect, too, as portraits, are Dawkins, the pigeon, of whom Deuceace and Blewitt, well-trained hawks, make so summary a meal, and Lady Griffin, the young widow of Sir George Griffin, K. C. B., and her ugly step-daughter, Matilda! No one can question the probability of all the incidents of the story. Such things are happening every day. Young fools like Dawkins fall among thieves like Deuceace and Blewitt, and the same game of matrimonial speculation is being played daily, which is played with such notable results by Deuceace and Miss Matilda Griffin. The accomplished swindler is ever and anon caught like him, the fond silly woman as constantly awakened, like her, out of an insane dream, to find herself the slave of cowardice and brutality. Villany so cold, so polished, so armed at all points, as that of the Earl of Crabs, is more rare, but men learn by bitter experience, that there are in society rascals equally agreeable and equally unredeemed. There is no vulgar daubing in the portraiture of all these worthies;—the lines are all true as life itself, and bitten into the page as it were with vitriol. Every touch bears the traces of a master's hand, and yet what man ever cared to return to the book, what woman ever got through it without a sensation of humiliation and disgust? Both would wish to believe the writer untrue to nature, if they could; both would willingly forego the exhibition of what, under the aspect in which it is here shown, is truly "that hideous sight, a naked human heart."

Of all Mr. Thackeray's books this is, perhaps, the most open to the charge of sneering cynicism, and yet even here glimpses of that stern but deep pathos are to be found, of which Mr. Thackeray has since proved himself so great a master. We can even now remember the mingled sensation of shuddering pity and horror, with which the conclusion of this story years ago impressed us. Deuceace, expecting an immense fortune with Miss Matilda Griffin, who, on her part, believes him to be in possession of a fine income, marries her;—the marriage having been managed by his father, the Earl of Crabs, in order that he may secure Lady Griffin for himself, with all Miss Griffin's fortune, which falls to her ladyship, in the event of Matilda marrying without her consent. Lady Griffin has previously

revenged herself for the Honourable Algernon's slight of her own attachment to him, by involving him in a duel with a Frenchman, in which he loses his right hand. The marriage once concluded, Deuceace and his wife find their mutual mistake, and the penniless pair, on appealing for aid to the Earl of Crabs and his new-made wife, are spurned with remorseless contempt. What ensues, let Mr. Yellowplush tell in his own peculiar style:—

"About three months after, when the season was beginning at Paris, and the autumn leaves were on the ground, my lord, my lady, me and Mortimer, were taking a stroll on the Boddy Balong, the carriage driving on slowly ahead, and us as happy as posbill, admiring the pleasant woods, and the golden sunset.

"My lord was expayshating to my lady upon the exquiset beauty of the sear, and pouring forth a host of butifile and virtuous sentiment sootable to the hour. It was dalitelle to hear him. 'Ah!' said he, 'black must be the heart, my love, which does not feel the influence of a scene like this: gathering, as it were, from those sunlit skies a portion of their celestial gold, and gaining somewhat of heaven with each pure draught of this delicious air!'

"Lady Crabs did not speak, but prest his arm, and looked upwards. Mortimer and I, too, felt some of the infliwents of the sear, and lent on our goold sticks in silence. The carriage drew up close to us, and my lord and my lady sauntered slowly towards it.

"Jest at the place was a bench, and on the bench sate a poorly drest woman, and by her, leaning against a tree, was a man whom I thought I'd seen befor. He was drest in a shabby blew coat, with white seams and copper buttons; a torn hat was on his head, and great quantaties of matted hair and whiskers disfiggared his countnints. He was not shaved and as pale as stone.

"My lord and lady didn't take the slightest notice of him, but past on to the carriage. Me and Mortimer lickwise took *our* places. As we past, the man had got a grip of the woman's shoulder, who was holding down her head, sobbing bitterly.

"No sooner were my lord and lady seated, than they both, with igstrame dellixy and good natur, bust into a ror of lafter, peal upon peal, whooping and screaching, enough to frighten the evening silents.

"Deuceace turned round. I see his face now—the face of a devvle of hell! Fust, he lookt towards the carriage, and pointed to it with his maimed arm; then he raised the other, and struck the woman by his side. She fell, screaming.

"Poor thing! Poor thing!"

There is a frightful truthfulness in this picture that makes the heart sick. We turn from it, as we do from the hideous realities of an old Flemish painter, or from some dismal revelation in a police report. Still, the author's power burns into the memory the image of that miserable woman, and his simple exclamation

at the close tells of a heart that has bled at the monstrous brutalities to the sex, of which the secret records are awfully prolific, but which the romance writer rarely ventures to approach. If we have smiled at the miserable vanity and weakness of poor Matilda Griffin before, we remember them no more after that woful scene.

"The Luck of Barry Lyndon," which followed soon after the appearance of "The Yellowplush Papers," was a little relieved by brighter aspects of humanity, but so little, that it can never be referred to with pleasure, despite the sparkling brilliancy of the narrative, and abundant traces of the most delightful humour. How completely, in a sentence, does Barry convey to us a picture of his mother!

"Often and often has she talked to me and the neighbours regarding her own humility and piety, pointing them out in such a way, that I would defy the most obstinate to disbelieve her."

The same vein of delicate sarcasm runs throughout the tale, where every page is marked by that matchless expressiveness and ease of style for which Mr. Thackeray is the envy of his contemporaries. The hero is as worthless a scoundrel as ever swindled at *ecarté*, or earthed his man in a duel. He narrates his own adventures and rascalities with the artless *naïveté* of a man troubled by no scruples of conscience or misgivings of the moral sense,—a conception as daring as the execution is admirable. For a time the reader is carried along, with a smiling admiration of the author's humour, and quiet way of bringing into view the seamy side of a number of respectable shams; but when he finds that he is passed along from rake to swindler, from gambler to ruffian,—that the men lie, cheat, and cog the dice, and that the women intrigue, or drink brandy in their tea, or are fatuous fools, the atmosphere becomes oppressive, and even the brilliancy of the wit begins to pall. Yet there are passages in this story, and sketches of character, which Mr. Thackeray has never surpassed. Had these been only mingled with some pictures of people not either hateful for wickedness or despicable for weakness, and in whom we could have felt a cordial interest, the tale might have won for its author much of the popularity which he must have seen, with no small chagrin, carried off by men altogether unfit to cope with him in originality or power.

There is always apparent in Mr. Thackeray's works, so much natural kindness, so true a sympathy with goodness, that only some bitter and unfortunate experiences can explain, as it seems to us, the tendency of his mind at this period to present human nature in its least ennobling aspects. Whenever the man himself speaks out in the first person, as in his pleasant books of travel,—

his "Irish Sketch Book," and his "Journey from Cornhill to Cairo,"—he shows so little of the cynic, or the melancholy Jaques—finds so hearty a delight in the contemplation of all simple pleasures, and so cordially recognises all social worth and all elevation of character, as to create surprise that he should have taken so little pains in his fictions to delineate good or lofty natures. That this arose from no want of love for his fellow-men, or of admiration for the power which, by depicting goodness, self-sacrifice, and greatness, inspires men with something of these qualities, is obvious,—for even at the time when he was writing those sketches to which we have adverted, Mr. Thackeray's pen was recording, with delightful cordiality, the praises of his great rival, Dickens, for these very excellences, the absence of which in his own writings is their greatest drawback. It is thus he wrote in February, 1844, of Dickens's "Christmas Carol." We quote from "Fraser's Magazine."

"And now there is but one book left in the box, the smallest one, but oh! how much the best of all. It is the work of the master of all the English humourists now alive; the young man who came and took his place calmly at the head of the whole tribe, and who has kept it. Think of all we owe Mr. Dickens since those half dozen years, the store of happy hours that he has made us pass, the kindly and pleasant companions whom he has introduced to us; the harmless laughter, the generous wit, the frank, manly, human love which he has taught us to feel! Every month of those years has brought us some kind token from this delightful genius. His books may have lost in art, perhaps, but could we afford to wait? Since the days when the *Spectator* was produced by a man of kindred mind and temper, what books have appeared that have taken so affectionate a hold of the English public as these? They have made millions of rich and poor happy; they might have been locked up for nine years, doubtless, and pruned here and there, and improved (which I doubt), but where would have been the reader's benefit all this time, while the author was elaborating his performance? Would the communion between the writer and the public have been what it is now,—something continual, confidential, something like personal affection? . . . .

"Who can listen to objections regarding such a book as this? It seems to me a national benefit, and to every man or woman who reads it a personal kindness. The last two people I heard speak of it were women; neither knows the other or the author, and both said, by way of criticism, 'God bless him!' . . . . As for TINY TIM, there is a certain passage in the book regarding that young gentleman about which a man should hardly venture to speak in print or in public, any more than he would of any other affections of his private heart. There is not a reader in England but that little creature will be a bond of union between the author and him; and he will say of Charles Dickens, as the woman just now, 'God bless him!' What a feeling is this for a writer to be able to inspire, and what a reward to reap!"

In a writer who felt and wrote thus, it was most strange to find no effort made to link himself to the affections of his readers by some portraiture, calculated to take hold of their hearts, and to be remembered with a feeling of gratitude and love! Whatever Mr. Thackeray's previous experiences may have been, however his faith in human goodness may have been shaken, the very influences which he here recognises of such a writer as Dickens must have taught him how much there is in his fellow-men that is neither weak nor wicked, and how many sunny and hopeful aspects our common life presents to lighten even the saddest heart.

The salutary influence of Dickens's spirit may, indeed, be traced in the writings of Mr. Thackeray about this period, tempering the bitterness of his sarcasm, and suggesting more pleasing views of human nature. The genius of the men is, however, as diverse as can well be conceived. The mind of the one is as hopeful as it is loving. That of the other, not less loving, though less expansive in its love, is constitutionally unhopeful. We smile at folly with the one; the other makes us smile, indeed, but he makes us think too. The one sketches humours and eccentricities which are the casualties of character; the other paints characters in their essence, and with a living truth which will be recognised a hundred years hence as much as now. Dickens's serious characters, for the most part, relish of melodramatic extravagance; there is no mistake about Thackeray's being from the life. Dickens's sentiment, which, when good, is good in the first class, is frequently far-fetched and pitched in an unnatural key—his pathos elaborated by the artifices of the practised writer. Thackeray's sentiment, rarely indulged, is never otherwise than genuine; his pathos is unforced, and goes to the roots of the heart. The style of Dickens, originally lucid, and departing from directness and simplicity only to be amusingly quaint, soon became vicious, affected, and obscure: that of Thackeray has always been manly and transparent, presenting his idea in the very fittest garb. Dickens's excellence springs from his heart, to whose promptings he trusts himself with an unshrinking faith that kindles a reciprocal enthusiasm in his readers: there is no want of heart in Thackeray, but its utterances are timorous and few, and held in check by the predominance of intellectual energy and the habit of reflection. Thackeray keeps the realities of life always before his eyes: Dickens wanders frequently into the realms of imagination, and, if at times he only brings back, especially of late, fantastic and unnatural beings, we must not forget, that he has added to literature some of its most beautiful ideals. When he moves us

to laughter, the laughter is broad and joyous; when he bathes the cheek in tears, he leaves in the heart the sunshine of a bright after-hope. The mirth which Thackeray moves rarely passes beyond a smile, and his pathos, while it leaves the eye unmoistened, too often makes the heart sad to the core, and leaves it so. Both are satirists of the vices of the social system; but the one would rally us into amendment, the other takes us straight up to the flaw, and compels us to admit it. Our fancy merely is amused by Dickens, and this often when he means to satirize some grave vice of character or the defects of a tyrannous system. It is never so with Thackeray: he forces the mind to acknowledge the truth of his picture, and to take the lesson home. Dickens seeks to amend the heart by depicting virtue; Thackeray seeks to achieve the same end by exposing vice. Both are great moralists; but it is absurd to class them as belonging to one school. In matter and in manner they are so thoroughly unlike, that when we find this done, as by Sir Archibald Alison, in the review of the literature of the present century in his "History of Europe," we can only attribute the mistake to a limited acquaintance with their works. Of Dickens, Sir Archibald apparently knows something, but he can know little of Mr. Thackeray's writings, to limit his merits, as he does, to "talent and graphic powers," and the ridicule of ephemeral vices. On the contrary, the very qualities are to be found in them which in the same paragraph he defines as essential to the writer for lasting fame—"profound insight into the human heart, condensed power of expression,"—the power of "diving deep into the inmost recesses of the soul, and reaching failings universal in mankind," like Juvenal, Cervantes, Le Sage, or Molière.

Sir Archibald comes nearer to the truth when he ascribes to Mr. Thackeray the want of imaginative power and elevation of thought. But what right have we to expect to find the qualities of a Raphael in a Hogarth, or of a Milton in a Fielding? If genius exercises its peculiar gifts to pure ends, we are surely not entitled to ask for more, or to measure it by an inapplicable standard. It cannot be denied that Mr. Thackeray's ideas of excellence, as they appear in his books, are low, and that there is little in them to elevate the imagination, or to fire the heart with noble impulses. His vocation does not lie peculiarly in this direction; and he would have been false to himself had he simulated an exaltation of sentiment which was foreign to his nature. It has always seemed to us, however, that he has scarcely done himself justice in this particular. Traces may be seen in his writings of a latent enthusiasm, and a fervent admiration for beauty and worth, overlaid by a crust of cold distrustfulness,

which we hope to see give way before happier experiences, and a more extended range of observation. To find the good and true in life, one must believe heartily in both. Men who shut up their own hearts in scepticism are apt to freeze the fountains of human love and generosity in others. Mr. Thackeray must, ere now, have learned, by the most pleasing of all proofs, that there is a world of nobleness, loving-kindness, purity, and self-denial in daily exercise under the surface of that society whose distempers he has so skilfully probed. The best movements of his own nature, in his works, have brought back to him, we doubt not, many a cordial response, calculated to inspire him with a more cheerful hope, and a warmer faith in our common humanity. Indeed, his writings already bear the marks of this salutary influence; and it is not always in depicting wickedness or weakness that he has latterly shown his greatest power.

The unpretending character of Mr. Thackeray's fictions has no doubt arisen in a great degree from a desire to avoid the vices into which the great throng of recent novelists had fallen. While professing to depict the manners and events of every-day life, their works were, for the most part, essentially untrue to nature. The men and women were shadows, the motives wide of the springs of action by which life is actually governed, the sentiments false and exaggerated, the manners deficient in local colouring. Imaginative power was not wanting, but it revelled so wildly, that it merely stimulated the nerves, and left no permanent impression on the heart or understanding. Elevation of sentiment abounded in excess, but the conduct of the heroes and heroines was frequently hard to square with the rules of morality, or the precepts of religion. Bulwer's genius had run wild in pseudo-philosophy and spurious sentimentalism. James was reeling off interminable yarns of florid verbiage. Mrs. Gore's facile pen was reiterating the sickening conventionalisms of so-called fashionable life; and Ainsworth had exalted the scum of Newgate and Hounslow into heroic beings of generous impulses and passionate souls. Things had ceased to be called by their right names; the principles of right and wrong were becoming more and more confounded; sham sentiment, sham morality, sham heroism, were everywhere rampant; and romance-writers every day wandering farther and farther from nature and truth. Their characters were either paragons of excellence, or monsters of iniquity—grotesque caricatures, or impossible contradictions; and the laws of nature, and the courses of heaven, were turned aside to enable the authors to round off their tales according to their own low standard of morality or ambition, and narrow conceptions of the working of God's providence. In criticism and in parody, Mr. Thackeray did his utmost to demolish this vicious

state of things. The main object of his "Luck of Barry Lyndon," and his "Catharine Hayes," was to show in their true colours the class of rogues, ruffians, and demireps, towards whom the sympathies of the public had been directed by Bulwer, Ainsworth, and Dickens. Mr. Thackeray felt deeply the injury to public morals, and the disgrace to literature, inflicted by the perverted exercise of these writers' powers upon subjects which had hitherto been wisely confined to such recondite chronicles as "The Terrific Register," and the "Newgate Calendar." Never was antidote more required; and the instinct of truth, which uniformly guides Mr. Thackeray's pen, stamped his pictures with the hues of a ghastly reality. Public taste, however, rejected the genuine article, and rejoiced in the counterfeit. The philosophical cut-throat, or the sentimental Magdalene, were more piquant than the low-browed ruffian of the condemned cell, or the vulgar Circe of Shire-lane; and until the mad fit had spent itself in the exhaustion of a false excitement, the public ear was deaf to the remonstrances of its caustic monitor.

Nor was it only in the literature of Newgate, as it was well named, that he found matter for reproof and reformation. He had looked too earnestly and closely at life, and its issues, not to see that the old and easy manner of the novelist in distributing what is called poetical justice, and lodging his favourites in a haven of common-place comfort at the close of some improbable game of cross-purposes, had little in common with the actual course of things in the world, and could convey little either to instruct the understanding, to school the affections, or to strengthen the will. At the close of his "Barry Lyndon," we find his views on this matter expressed in the following words:—

"There is something naïve and simple in that time-honoured style of novel writing, by which Prince Prettyman, at the end of his adventures, is put in possession of every worldly prosperity, as he has been endowed with every mental and bodily excellence previously. The novelist thinks that he can do no more for his darling hero than to make him a lord. Is it not a poor standard that of the *summum bonum*? The greatest good in life is not to be a lord, *perhaps not even to be happy*. Poverty, illness, a humpback, may be rewards and conditions of good, as well as that bodily prosperity which all of us unconsciously set up for worship."

With these views, it was natural that in his first work of magnitude, "Vanity Fair," Mr. Thackeray should strike out a course which might well startle those who had been accustomed to the old routine of caterers for the circulating libraries. The press had already teemed with so many heroes of unexceptionable attractions, personal and mental,—so many heroines, in whom the existence of human frailty had been altogether ignored; we had

been so drenched with fine writing and poetical sensibility, that he probably thought a little wholesome abstinence in all these respects might not be unprofitable. He plainly had no ambition to go on feeding the public complacency with pictures of life, from which nothing was to be learned,—which merely amused the fancy, or inflated the mind with windy aspirations, and false conceptions of human destiny and duty. To place before us the men and women who compose the sum of that life in the midst of which we are moving,—to show them to us in such situations as we might see them in any day of our lives,—to probe the principles upon which the framework of society in the nineteenth century is based,—to bring his characters to the test of trial and temptation, such as all may experience,—to force us to recognise goodness and worth, however unattractive the guise in which they may appear,—in a word, to paint life as it is, coloured as little as may be with the hues of the imagination, and to teach wholesome truths for every-day necessities, was the higher task to which Mr. Thackeray now addressed himself. He could not carry out this purpose without disappointing those who think a novel flat which does not centre its interest on a handsome and faultless hero, with a comfortable balance at his banker's, or a heroine of good family and high imaginative qualities. Life does not abound in such. Its greatest virtues are most frequently hid in the humblest and least attractive shapes; its greatest vices most commonly veiled under a fascinating exterior, and a carriage of unquestionable respectability. It would have cost a writer of Mr. Thackeray's practised skill little effort to have thrown into his picture figures which would have satisfied the demands of those who insist upon delineations of ideal excellence in works of fiction; but, we apprehend, these would not have been consistent with his design of holding up, as in a mirror, the strange chaos of that "Vanity Fair," on which his own meditative eye had so earnestly rested.

That Mr. Thackeray may have pushed his views to excess, we do not deny. He might, we think, have accomplished his object quite as effectually by letting in a little more sunshine on his picture, and by lightening the shadows in some of his characters. Without any compromise of truth, he might have given us somebody to admire and esteem, without qualifications or humiliating reserves. That no human being is exempt from frailties, we need not be reminded. The "divine Imogen" herself, we daresay, had her faults, if the whole truth were told; and we will not undertake to say, that Juliet may not have cost old Capulet a good deal of excusable anxiety. But why dash our admiration by needlessly reminding us of such facts? There is a wantonness in fixing the eye upon some merely casual flaw, after you have filled the heart

and imagination with a beautiful image. It is a sorry morality which evermore places the death's-head among the flowers and garlands of the banquet. In "Vanity Fair," Mr. Thackeray has frequently fallen into this error; and he has further marred it by wilfully injuring our interest in the only characters which he puts forward for our regard. Anxious to avoid the propensity of novelists to make Apollos of their heroes, and paragons of their heroines, he has run into the opposite extreme and made Dobbin, —the only thoroughly excellent and loveable character in the book,—so ungainly as to be all but objectionable, and his pet heroine, Amelia, so foolishly weak as to wear out our patience.

This is all the more vexatious, seeing that the love of Dobbin for Amelia is the finest delineation of pure and unselfish devotion within the whole range of fiction. Such love in woman has often been depicted, but Mr. Thackeray is the first who has had the courage to essay, and the delicacy of touch to perfect, a portraiture of this lifelong devotion in the opposite sex. It is a favourite theory of his, that men who love best are prone to be most mistaken in their choice. We doubt the truth of the position; and we question the accuracy of the illustration in Dobbin. He would have got off his knees, we think, and gone away long before he did; at all events, having once gone, the very strength of character which attached him to Amelia so long would have kept him away. Why come back to mate with one whom he had proved unable to reach to the height of the attachment which he bore her? Admirable as are the concluding scenes between Amelia and the Major, we wish Mr. Thackeray could have wound up his story in some other way, for nothing is, to our minds, sadder among the grave impressions left by this saddening book, than the thought that even Dobbin has found his ennobling dream of devotion to be a weariness and a vanity. It is as though one had ruthlessly trodden down some single solitary flower in a desert place.

Mr. Thackeray has inflicted a similar shock upon his readers' feelings in handing over Laura Bell, with her fresh, frank heart, and fine understanding, to Arthur Pendennis, that aged youth, who is just as unworthy of her as Amelia is of Dobbin. If such things do occur in life—and who has been so fortunate in his experiences as to say they do not!—is the novelist, whose vocation it is to cheer as well as to instruct, only to give us the unhappy issues of feelings the highest and purest, and never to gladden us with the hope that all is not disappointment, and our utmost bliss not merely a putting up with something which might have been worse? With all the latitude of life to choose from, why be evermore reminding us of the limitations of our happiness,—the compromise of our fairest hopes? It was a

poor and false conception of human happiness which placed it always in worldly prosperity; but is it not also wide of truth, to make the good and noble always suffer, and to teach that all high desires are vain—that they must either be baffled, or, if achieved, dissolve in disappointment? This is a cheerless creed, and false as cheerless; and it is by bringing it too prominently forward, that Mr. Thackeray has exposed himself to a charge of cynicism and want of heart.

Of these defects, however, no thoughtful reader will accuse him. His writings abound in passages of tenderness, which bespeak a heart gentle as a woman's, a sensitiveness only less fine;—a depth of pity and charity, which writers of more pretence to these qualities never approach. “The still, sad music of humanity” reverberates through all his writings. He has painted so much of the bad qualities of mankind, and painted them so well, that this power has been very generally mistaken for that delight in the contemplation of wickedness or frailty, and that distrust of human goodness, which constitute the cynic. But this is to judge him unfairly. If his pen be most graphic in such characters as Becky Sharp, the Marquis of Steyne, Miss Crawley, or Major Pendennis, it is so because such characters present stronger lines than the quiet charities or homely chivalry in which alone it is possible for excellence to express itself in the kind of life with which his writings deal. Such men and women strike the eye more than the Dobbins, the Helen Pendennises, and Warringtons of society. These must be followed with a loving heart and open understanding, before their worth will blossom into view; and it is, to our mind, one of Mr. Thackeray's finest characteristics, that he makes personages of this class so subordinate as he does to the wickedly amusing and amusingly wicked characters which crowd his pages. This, indeed, is one of those features which help to give to his pictures the air of reality in which lies their peculiar charm, and make us feel while we read them as though we were moving among the experiences of our own very life. Here and there amid the struggle, and swagger, and hypocrisy, and time-serving, and vanity, and falsehood of the world, we come upon some true soul, some trait of shrinking goodness, of brave endurance, of noble sacrifice. So is it in Mr. Thackeray's books. In the midst of his most brilliant satire, or his most crowded scenes, some simple suggestion of love and goodness occurs, some sweet touch of pathos, that reveals to us how kind is the nature, how loving and simple the soul, from which they spring.

It is not cynicism, we believe, but a constitutional proneness to a melancholy view of life, which gives that unpleasing colour to many of Mr. Thackeray's books which most readers resent.

He will not let his eye rest upon a fair face, without thinking of the ugly skull beneath, and reminding himself and us "that beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes." In his heartiest mirth he seems to have in view the headache, or the labours of to-morrow. Because all humanity is frail, and all joys are fleeting, he will not hope the best of the one, nor permit us to taste heartily of the other. He insists on dashing his brightest fancies with needless shadows, and will not let us be comfortable, after he has done his best to make us so. There is a perversity in this, which Mr. Thackeray, in justice to himself and kindness to his readers, should subdue. Let him not diminish his efforts to make them honester, and simpler, and wiser; but let him feed them more with cheerful images, and the contemplation of beauty without its flaws and worth without its drawbacks. No writer of the day has the same power of doing this, if he pleases. We could cite many passages in proof of this, but can it be doubted by any one who reads the following essay, from the series which appeared in *Punch* some years ago, as from the pen of Dr. Solomon Pacifico?

ON A GOOD-LOOKING YOUNG LADY.

"Some time ago I had the fortune to witness at the house of Erminia's brother a rather pretty and affecting scene: whereupon, as my custom is, I would like to make a few moral remarks. I must premise that I knew Erminia's family long before the young lady was born. Victorina her mother, Boa her aunt, Chinchilla her grandmother—I have been intimate with every one of these ladies: and at the table of Sabilla, her married sister, with whom Erminia lives, have a cover laid for me whenever I choose to ask for it.

"Everybody who has once seen Erminia remembers her. Fate is beneficent to a man before whose eyes at the parks, or churches, or theatres, or public or private assemblies it throws Erminia. To see her face is a personal kindness for which one ought to be thankful to Fortune; who might have shown you Caprella, with her whiskers, or Felissa, with her savage eyes, instead of the calm and graceful, the tender and beautiful Erminia. When she comes into the room, it is like a beautiful air of Mozart breaking upon you: when she passes through a ball-room, everybody turns and asks who is that Princess, that fairy lady? Even the women, especially those who are the most beautiful themselves, admire her. By one of those kind freaks of favouritism which Nature takes, she has endowed this young lady with almost every kind of perfection: has given her a charming face, a perfect form, a pure heart, a fine perception and wit, a pretty sense of humour, a laugh and a voice that are as sweet as music to hear, for innocence and tenderness ring in every accent, and a grace of movement which is a curiosity to watch, for in every attitude of motion or repose her form moves or settles into beauty, so that a perpetual grace accompanies her. I have before said that I am an old fogey. On the day when I leave off

admiring, I hope I shall die. To see Erminia is not to fall in love with her: there are some women too handsome, as it were, for that: and I would as soon think of making myself miserable because I could not marry the moon, and make the silver-bowed Goddess Diana Mrs. Pacifico, as I should think of having any personal aspirations towards Miss Erminia.

"Well then, it happened the other day that this almost peerless creature, on a visit to the country, met that great poet, Timotheus, whose habitation is not far from the country house of Erminia's friend, and who, upon seeing the young lady, felt for her that admiration which every man of taste experiences upon beholding her, and which, if Mrs. Timotheus had not been an exceedingly sensible person, would have caused a great jealousy between her and the great bard her husband. But, charming and beautiful herself, Mrs. Timotheus can even pardon another woman for being so; nay, with perfect good sense, though possibly with a *little* factitious enthusiasm, she professes to share to its fullest extent the admiration of the illustrious Timotheus for the young beauty.

"After having made himself well acquainted with Erminia's perfections, the famous votary of Apollo and leader of the tuneful choir did what might be expected from such a poet under such circumstances, and began to sing. This is the way in which Nature has provided that poets should express their emotions. When they see a beautiful creature they straightway fall to work with their ten syllables and eight syllables, with duty rhyming to beauty, vernal to eternal, riddle to fiddle, or what you please, and turn out to the best of their ability, and with great pains and neatness on their own part, a copy of verses in praise of the adorable object. I myself may have a doubt about the genuineness of the article produced, or of the passion which vents itself in this way, for how can a man who has to assort carefully his tens and eights, to make his epithets neat and melodious, to hunt here and there for rhymes, and to bite the tip of his pen, or pace the gravel walk in front of his house searching for ideas—I doubt, I say, how a man who must go through the above process before turning out a decent set of verses, can be actuated by such strong feelings as you and I, when, in the days of our youth, with no particular preparation, but with our hearts full of manly ardour, and tender and respectful admiration, we went to the Saccharissa for the time being, and poured out our souls at her feet. That sort of eloquence comes spontaneously; that poetry doesn't require rhyme-jingling and metre-sorting, but rolls out of you you don't know how, as much, perhaps, to your own surprise as to that of the beloved object whom you address. In my time, I know whenever I began to make verses about a woman, it was when my heart was no longer very violently smitten about her, and the verses were a sort of mental dram and artificial stimulus with which a man worked himself up to represent enthusiasm and perform passion. Well, well; I see what you mean; I *am* jealous of him. Timotheus's verses were beautiful, that's the fact—confound him!—and I wish I could write as well, or half as well indeed, or do anything to give

Erminia pleasure. Like an honest man and faithful servant, he went and made the best thing he could, and laid this offering at Beauty's feet. What can a gentleman do more! My dear Mrs. Pacifico here remarks that I never made *her* a copy of verses. Of course not, my love. I am not a verse-making man, nor are you that sort of object—that sort of target, I may say—at which, were I a poet, I would choose to discharge those winged shafts of Apollo.

"When Erminia got the verses and read them, she laid them down, and with one of the prettiest and most affecting emotions which I ever saw in my life, she began to cry a little. The verses of course were full of praises of her beauty. 'They all tell me that,' she said; 'nobody cares for anything but that,' cried the gentle and sensitive creature, feeling within that she had a thousand accomplishments, attractions, charms, which her hundred thousand lovers would not see, whilst they were admiring her mere outward figure and head-piece.

"I once heard of another lady, '*de par le monde*,' as honest Des Bourdeilles says, who, after looking at her plain face in the glass, said, beautifully and pathetically, 'I am sure I should have made a good wife to any man, if he could but have got over my face!' and bewailing her maidenhood in this touching and artless manner, saying that she had a heart full of love, if anybody would accept it, full of faith and devotion, could she but find some man on whom to bestow it; she but echoed the sentiment which I have mentioned above, and which caused in the pride of her beauty the melancholy of the lonely and victorious beauty. 'We are full of love and kindness, ye men' each says; 'of truth and purity. We don't care about *your* good looks. Could we but find the right man, the man who loved us for ourselves, we would endow him with all the treasures of our hearts, and devote our lives to make him happy.' I admire and reverence Erminia's tears, and the simple heart-stricken plaint of the other forsaken lady. She is Jephthah's daughter, condemned by no fault of her own, but doomed by Fate to disappear from among women. The other is a queen in her splendour to whom all the Lords and Princes bow down and pay worship. 'Ah!' says she, 'it is to the Queen you are kneeling, all of you. I am a woman under this crown and this ermine. I want to be loved, and not to be worshipped: and to be allowed to love is given to everybody but me.'

"How much finer a woman's nature is than a man's (by an Ordinance of Nature for the purpose no doubt devised), how much purer and less sensual than ours, is in that fact so consoling to misshapen men, to ugly men, to little men, to giants, to old men, to poor men, to men scarred with the small-pox, or ever so ungainly or unfortunate—that their ill-looks or mishaps don't influence women regarding them, and that the awkwardest fellow has a chance for a prize. Whereas, when we, brutes that we are, enter a room, we sidle up naturally towards the prettiest woman; it is the pretty face and figure which attracts us; it is not virtue, or merit, or mental charms, be they ever so great. When one reads the fairy tale of Beauty and the Beast, no one is at all surprised at Beauty's being moved by Beast's gallantry, and devotion, and true-heartedness, and rewarding him with her own

love at last. There was hardly any need to make him a lovely young Prince in a gold dress under his horns and bearskin. Beast as he was, but good Beast, loyal Beast, brave, affectionate, upright, generous, enduring Beast, she would have loved his ugly mug without any attraction at all. It is her nature to do so, God bless her. It was a man made the story, one of those two-penny-halfpenny men-milliner moralists, who think that to have a handsome person and a title are the greatest gifts of fortune, and that a man is not complete unless he is a lord and has glazed boots. Or it may have been that the transformation alluded to did not actually take place, but was only spiritual, and in Beauty's mind, and that, seeing before her loyalty, bravery, truth, and devotion, they became in her eyes lovely, and that she hugged her Beast with a perfect contentment to the end.

"When ugly Wilkes said that he was only a quarter of an hour behind the handsomest man in England, meaning that the charms of his conversation would make him in that time at a lady's side as agreeable and fascinating as a beau, what a compliment he paid the whole sex! How true it is, (not of course applicable to *you*, my dear reader and lucky dog, who possess both wit and the most eminent personal attractions, but of the world in general,) *we* look for Beauty: women for Love.

"So, fair Erminia, dry your beautiful eyes and submit to your lot, and to that adulation which all men pay you; in the midst of which court of yours the sovereign must perforce be lonely. That solitude is a condition of your life, my dear young lady, which many would like to accept, nor will your dominion last much longer than my Lord Farncombe's, let us say, at the Mansion House, whom Time and the inevitable November will depose. Another potentate will ascend his throne: the toast-master will proclaim another name than his, and the cup will be pledged to another health. As with Xerxes and all his courtiers and army at the end of a few years, as with the flowers of the field, as with Lord Farncombe, so with Erminia: were I Timotheus of the tuneful quire, I might follow out this simile between Lord Mayors and Beauties, and with smooth rhymes and quaint antithesis make a verse offering to my fair young lady. But, Madam, your faithful Pacifico is not a poet, only a proser: and it is in truth, and not in numbers, that he admires you."

Why should not Mr. Thackeray give us another Erminia in his next novel, and confute his detractors? Addison never wrote anything finer in substance or in manner than this sketch. Indeed, a selection of Mr. Thackeray's best essays would, in our opinion, eclipse the united splendour of the whole British Essayists, both for absolute value in thought, and for purity and force of style. Had he never written anything of this kind but "*The Book of Snobs*," he would have taken first honours. What a book is this, so teeming with humour, character, and wisdom! How, like Jaques, does he "*pierce through the body of the country, city, court!*" Not, however,

like him "invectively," but with a genial raillery which soothes while it strikes. The kindly playfulness of Horace is his model. It is only in dealing with utter worthlessness, as in his portrait of Lieutenant-General the Honourable Sir George Granby Tufto, K.C.B., K.T.S., K.H., K.S.W., &c. &c., that he wields the merciless lash of Juvenal. How every word tells!

"His manners are irreproachable generally; in society he is a perfect gentleman, and a most thorough snob. A man can't help being a fool, be he ever so old; and Sir George is a greater ass at sixty-eight than he was when he first entered the army at fifteen. He distinguished himself everywhere; his name is mentioned with praise in a score of *Gazettes*: he is the man, in fact, whose padded breast, twinkling over with innumerable decorations, has already been introduced to the reader. It is difficult to say what virtues this prosperous gentleman possesses: he never read a book in his life; and with his purple old gouty fingers still writes a schoolboy hand. He has reached old age and grey hairs without being the least venerable. He dresses like an outrageously young man to the present moment, and laces and pads his old carcass as if he were still handsome George Tufto, of 1800. He is selfish, brutal, passionate, and a glutton. It is curious to mark him at table, and see him heaving in his waistband, his little bloodshot eyes gloating over his meal. He swears considerably in his talk, and tells fifty garrison stories after dinner. On account of his rank and services, people pay the bestarred and betitled old brute a sort of reverence; and he looks down upon you and me, and exhibits his contempt for us with a stupid and artless candour which is quite amusing to watch. Perhaps, had he been bred to another profession, he would not have been the disreputable old creature he now is. But what other? He was fit for none; too incorrigibly idle and dull for any trade but this, in which he has distinguished himself publicly as a good and gallant officer, and privately, for riding races, drinking port, fighting duels, and seducing women. He believes himself to be one of the most honourable and deserving beings in this world. About Waterloo-place, of afternoons, you may see him tottering in his varnished boots, and leering under the bonnets of the women who pass by. When he dies of apoplexy, the *Times* will have a quarter of a column about his services and battles—four lines of print will be wanted to describe his titles and orders alone—and the earth will cover one of the wickedest and dullest old wretches that ever strutted over it."

If this book were read in every household, especially in every household where the British Peerage is studied, what a world of weariness and vexation of spirit, of hypocrisy and meanness, of trivialty and foolish extravagance, would be saved! We would prescribe it as a manual for the British youth of both sexes: containing more suggestions for useful thought, more considerations for practical exercise, in reference to the common duties of life, than any lay volume we know. Never was satire more whole-

lamps—a scrubby-looking, yellow-faced foreigner, with cleaned gloves, is warbling inaudibly in a corner, to the accompaniment of another. ‘The Great Cacafogo,’ Mrs. Botibol whispers, as she passes you by—‘A great creature, Thumpenstrumpff, is at the instrument—the Hetman Platoff’s pianist, you know.’

“To hear this Cacafogo and Thumpenstrumpff, a hundred people are gathered together—a bevy of dowagers, stout or scraggy; a faint sprinkling of misses; six moody-looking lords, perfectly meek and solemn, wonderful foreign Counts, with bushy whiskers and yellow faces, and a great deal of dubious jewellery; young dandies with slim waists and open necks, and self-satisfied simpers, and flowers in their buttons; the old, stiff, stout, bald-headed *conversazione-roués*, whom you meet everywhere—who never miss a night of this delicious enjoyment, the three last caught lions of the season—Higgs, the traveller; Biggs, the novelist; and Toffey, who has come out so on the sugar question; Captain Flash, who is invited on account of his pretty wife, and Lord Ogleby, who goes wherever she goes—*que sais-je?* Who are the owners of all those showy scarfs and white neckcloths?—Ask little Tom Prig, who is there in all his glory, knows everybody, has a story about every one; and, as he trips home to his lodgings, in Jerinyu-street, with his Gibus-hat and his little glazed pumps, thinks he is the fashionablest young fellow in town, and that he really has passed a night of exquisite enjoyment.

“You go up (with your usual easy elegance of manner) and talk to Miss Smith in a corner.

“‘Oh, Mr. Snob! I’m afraid you’re sadly satirical.’

“That’s all she says. If you say it’s fine weather, she bursts out laughing; or hint that it’s very hot, she vows you are the drollest wretch! Meanwhile Mrs. Botibol is sumpering on fresh arrivals, the individual at the door is roaring out their names; poor Cacafogo is quivering away in the music room, under the impression that he will be *lancé* in the world by singing inaudibly here. And what a blessing it is to squeeze out of the door, and into the street, where a half-hundred of carriages are in waiting; and where the link-boy, with that unnecessary lanthorn of his, pounces upon all who issue out, and will insist upon getting your noble honour’s lordship’s cab.

“And to think that there are people who, after having been to Botibol on Wednesday, will go to Clutterbuck on Friday!”

What wonder Mr. Thackeray should be so often condemned, when the foibles and vices which he paints are just those which, more or less, infect the whole body of society. Some way or other, he hits the weakness or sore point of us all. Nothing escapes his eye; and with an instinct almost Shakspearian he probes the secrets of a character at one venture. Like all honest teachers, he inevitably inflicts pain; and hence the soreness of wounded vanity is often at the root of the unfavourable criticism of which he is the subject. It requires both generosity and candour to accept such severe lessons thankfully, and to love the

in Blanche Amory. We cannot think so. It is surely but a superficial eye which is unable to see how widely removed a little hypocritical affected coquette like Blanche Amory is from the woman of high breeding and fiery impulse—"the weed of glorious feature,"—who is presented for our admiration and surprise in Beatrix Castlewood. It were easy to point out in detail the differences between the prominent characters in this and Mr. Thackeray's other books, but such criticism is of little avail to those who cannot perceive such differences for themselves. The only feature which it owns in common with "*Vanity Fair*" is the insane attachment of Esmond to Beatrix. This pertinacity of devotion bears some analogy to Dobbin's for Amelia. But there was nothing humiliating in Dobbin's love: in Esmond's there is much. He is content to go on besieging with his addresses a woman, who not only rejects them, but has passed from the hands of one accepted suitor to another, till the whole bloom is worn off her nature. It is taxing our credulity too far to ask us to reconcile this with the other characteristics of Esmond. We never lose our respect for Dobbin: Esmond has wearied it out long before he shakes off his fetters, and weds the lady's mother, who has been wasting her heart upon him for years. Lady Castlewood is a portrait so exquisitely made out in all the details, so thoroughly loveable, and adorned by so many gracious characteristics, that we cannot but regret Mr. Thackeray should have placed her in a situation so repugnant to common feeling, as that of being the enamoured consoler of her own daughter's lover. Could we but forget this blemish, how much is there to admire in the delicacy with which the progress of her love for Esmond is traced,—the long martyrdom of feeling which she suffers so gently and unobtrusively,—the yearning fondness which hovered about him like a holy influence! Mr. Thackeray's worship for the sex is loyal, devout, and pure; and when he paints their love, a feeling of reverence and holiness infinitely sweet and noble pervades his pictures. Many instances may be cited from this book; but as an illustration we would merely point to the chapter where Esmond returns to England, after his first campaign, and meets Lady Castlewood at the cathedral.

"They walked as though they had never been parted, slowly, and with the grey twilight closing round them.

" 'And now we are drawing near to home,' she continued. 'I knew you would come, Harry, if—if it was but to forgive me for having spoken unjustly to you after that horrid, horrid misfortune.' . . .

" 'You had spared me many a bitter night had you told me sooner,' Mr. Esmond said.

" 'I know it, I know it,' she answered, in a tone of such sweet humility as made Esmond repent that he should ever have dared to

literary or political eminence, for he thereby needlessly hampers his own imagination, and places his readers in an attitude of criticism unfavourable to the success of his story. Every educated reader has formed, for example, certain ideas, more or less vivid, according to the extent of his reading or the vigour of his imagination, of Marlborough, Swift, Bolingbroke, Addison, or Steele; and what chance has the novelist of hitting in any one feature the ideal which his reader has so worked out for himself? The novelist cannot, moreover, keep within the limits of the biographer, but must heighten or tone down features of character for the purposes of his story. This he cannot do without violating that rigorous truth which ought uniformly to be preserved, wherever the character or conduct of eminent men is concerned. It would be easy to convict Mr. Thackeray not only of serious offences against this wholesome law, but also of anachronisms far more serious than any in his former works, and of inaccuracies in regard to well-known facts, which are fatal to the verisimilitude of the book as an autobiography. One of these latter is so gross as to be altogether inexcusable,—the betrothal of the Duke of Hamilton, just before his duel with Lord Mohun, to Beatrix Castlewood, whereas it is notorious that the Duchess of Hamilton was alive at the time. We can scarcely suppose Mr. Thackeray ignorant of a circumstance which is elaborately recorded in Swift's Journal, but in any case his perversion of the facts transcends all lawful licence in matters of the kind. A still graver transgression has been committed in his portraiture of Marlborough, which is so masterly as a piece of writing that its deviation from historical truth is the more to be deprecated. When he has branded him for posterity in words that imbed themselves in the memory, it is idle to attempt to neutralize the impression by making Esmond admit that, but for certain personal slights from the hero of Blenheim, he might have formed a very different estimate of his character. This admission is a trait true to life, but it is one which is not allowable in a novelist where the reputation of a historical personage is at stake. History is full enough of perversions without our romancers being allowed to add to them. Such defects as we have adverted to are probably inseparable from any attempt to place a fictitious character among historical incidents, but if this be the case, it only proves that the attempt should never be made.

These defects are the more to be regretted in a work distinguished by so much fine thought and subtle delineation of character. It has been alleged against it that Mr. Thackeray repeats himself,—that "*Esmond*" has his prototype in *Dobbin*, *Lord Castlewood* in *Rawdon Crawley*, and *Beatrix Castlewood*

selfishness and sensualism of men. There are passages in this book for which they may well say of him, as that woman said of Dickens for his "Christmas Carol," "God bless him! They do not forgive him, however, for the unnatural relation in which he has placed his hero and Lady Castlewood, and he is too wise an observer not to regard this as conclusive against his own judgment in the matter.

Mr. Thackeray will write better books than this, for his powers are ripening with every fresh emanation from his pen; his wisdom is more searching, his pathos sweeter, his humour of a more delicate flavour. He fills a large space now in the world's eye, and his reputation has become a matter of pride to his country. He is not a man to be insensible to the high regard in which he is so widely held, or to trifle with a fame which has been slowly but surely won. Kind wishes followed him to America from many an unknown friend, and kinder greetings await the return of the only satirist who mingles loving-kindness with his sarcasm, and charity and humility with his gravest rebuke.



### ART. III.—ICONOCLASM IN GERMAN PHILOSOPHY.

1. *Parerga und Paralipomena*. By A. Schopenhauer. Berlin. 1851.
2. *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*. By the same. Leipzig. 1819. *Zweite Auflage*. 1844.
3. *Ueber die vierfache Wurzel des Satzes vom zureichendem Grunde*. By the same. Rudolstadt. 1813.
4. *Vom Willen in der Natur*. By the same. Frankfort. 1833.
5. *Die beiden Grundprobleme der Ethik*. By the same. Frankfort. 1841.
6. *Zeitschrift für Philosophie*. By J. H. Fichte, Ulrici and Wirth. Halle. 1852.

FEW, indeed, we venture to assert, will be those of our English readers who are familiar with the name of Arthur Schopenhauer. Fewer still will there be who are aware that the mysterious being owning that name has been working for something like forty years to subvert that whole system of German philosophy which has been raised by the university professors



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# THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN REVIEW.

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## ARTICLE I.

*Poems, chiefly of Early and Late Years.* By WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. London: Edward Moxon, 1842.

THE task of the reviewer, when Mr. Wordsworth offers a new work to the public, differs considerably from his duty in the case of most other writers. The works of most authors, especially the poets, are commonly laid before us either separately or in selections, which, if not absolutely miscellaneous, claim little or no connexion with anything beyond the volume in which they are found;—the produce of occasional hours or occasional efforts, they are defrauded of none of their interest by being regarded apart, nor is any instruction lost by such a mode of viewing them. Even when, as happily sometimes still occurs, a really elaborate composition is published, its consistency is usually confined to its own boundaries; it is satisfied to be at one with itself, and makes no pretensions to any wider harmony. But Mr. Wordsworth's is a mind which sees its own processes so distinctly, and has arranged its powers and objects in so orderly and definite a scheme, that the degree of coherency with which most writers are content both to write and to be read, is rejected by him as insufficient; he aims to be the exemplar of a whole system himself.

Even at their first appearances, his works have seldom come forward in reliance on their own merits solely; they have claimed attention, at the same time, as illustrations of peculiar views of his art and its principles, or expositions of his

periods, of very unequal length indeed, but not indistinctly showing their diversity of character and spirit. By the help of these divisions, which we shall call respectively, the educational, the poetical, and the philosophical periods, we hope to show in an intelligible form the growth and development of one of the most remarkable minds of our day.

But we must begin by confessing that our division still leaves out one volume of Mr. Wordsworth's works, that, viz. published in 1793. It contained the 'Evening Walk' and 'Descriptive Sketches,' with a few shorter poems of the same date. But these, though eminently characteristic of the man—of his quiet and truthful observation, his serious tone of thought, and his turn for lofty and ornate language,—belong so little to the poet, the *artist*, whose native tendencies are modified by his principles of composition, that in our present investigation they are only in the way; all that they teach us is taught elsewhere, while they show nothing to the point which is our especial subject. Of the original composition of Mr. Wordsworth's mind, they do indeed give us some information; but of its development none whatever, because in truth they were produced before it had begun to grow. It seems, therefore, best wholly to disregard them, and with the confession of having so done, we proceed to our remarks on the first—the *educational* period, as we have taken the liberty to call it, of Mr. Wordsworth's genius.

Of this period, which we should make extend from about 1793 to 1797, from the poet's twenty-fourth to his twenty-eighth year, Mr. Wordsworth, as if conscious himself of the preparatory and imperfect character of the poems then produced, had, until the present volume was published, given the world no more than the 'Female Vagrant.' Two very short pieces only require to be excepted, and these assigned to the two last years of the period. With these exceptions, these years—so momentous in history, so critical usually to the individual—presented a blank in the series of Mr. Wordsworth's productions. That it was really a blank, no one could believe who considered the man and the circumstances; but it was a blank to the public. Now then for the first time the sealed chamber is opened, and certainly it is not without a deep interest that we enter to see what occupied the mind of such a man

Of the mind's phantoms, horrible as vain.  
The stones, as if to cover him from day,  
Rolled at his back along the living plain ;  
He fell, and without sense or motion lay ;  
But, when the trance was gone, rose and pursued his way."

He next finds Stonehenge and next a guidepost, no sooner  
seen than lost. Lastly, he discovers a lonely spital, which

" Kind pious hands did to the Virgin build,"

and which had since gained the name of the Dead House.  
Entering the miserable hospice he hears a deep sigh, and  
perceives by the faint light a woman who is mourning in her  
sleep.

" He waked her—spake in tone that would not fail,  
He hoped, to calm her mind ; but ill he sped,  
For of that ruin she had heard a tale  
Which now with freezing thoughts did all her powers assail ;  
Had heard of one who, forced from storms to shroud,  
Felt the loose walls of this decayed Retreat  
Rock to incessant neighings shrill and loud,  
While his horse pawed the floor with furious heat ;  
Till on a stone, that sparkled to his feet,  
Struck, and still struck again, the troubled horse :  
The man half raised the stone with pain and sweat,  
Half raised, for well his arm might lose its force  
Disclosing the grim head of a late-murdered corse."

This unfortunate person is the woman whom we have so  
long known as the Female Vagrant ; she repeats her unhappy  
story, of which we need not remind the reader. When that  
is concluded he attempts to comfort her,

" And not in vain, while they went pacing side by side."

Ere they have proceeded far they hear a shrill scream.

" They paused and heard a hoarser voice blaspheme,  
And female cries."

A peasant, in fact, was savagely beating his child, who in  
his play had provoked him ; the child was screaming, the  
father blaspheming, and the "female cries" proceeded from  
the mother. Hereupon the sailor,

" His voice with indignation rising high  
Such further deed in manhood's name forbade ;

The peasant, wild in passion, made reply  
 With bitter insult and revilings sad ;  
 Asked him in scorn, *What business there he had ?*” etc.

The sailor, without answering this natural inquiry, lifts up the poor child and discovers on his “battered head”

“Strange repetition of the deadly wound  
 He had himself inflicted.”

Between compassion and self-reproach he bursts into “tears of wrath,” which “beguile the father,” who now relenting kisses his son, and “so all is reconciled ;” and after a short, and we fear not very intelligible lesson delivered by the sailor, the pair pass on, and travel in company as far as an inn, where “they in comfort fed.” “Their breakfast done,” they are obliged to part, and leaving the sailor there, the woman proceeds alone. But she has gone only a very short distance when she finds a cart and horse standing beside a rivulet, and within the cart

“A pale-faced woman, in disease far gone.  
 The carman wet her lips as well behaved :  
 Bed under her lean body there was none ;  
 Though even to die near one she most had loved  
 She could not of herself those wasted limbs have moved.”

In simple compassion the woman now retraces her steps after the cart as far as the inn, where the host, hostess and sailor run out and charitably bestow on the sufferer the attention her case requires. Then reviving for a short time, she says enough to discover that she is the sailor’s wife, driven in destitution from the shed she had occupied by the suspicion which attached to her husband, which however she entirely disbelieves and expatiates warmly on his goodness and kindness. The sailor in his anguish declares himself to her ; but the joy is too much for her.

“To tell the change that Voice within her wrought,  
 Nature by sign or sound made no essay ;  
 A sudden joy surprised expiring thought,  
 And every mortal pang dissolved away.  
 Borne gently to a bed, in death she lay ;  
 Yet still while over her the husband bent,  
 A look was in her face which seemed to say,  
 ‘Be blest ; by sight of thee from Heaven was sent

Peace to my parting soul, the fulness of content.'"  
" Her corse interred, not one hour he remained,"

but

" to the city straight  
He journeyed, and forthwith his crime declared,"

and was hanged. We must add the last consolatory stanza.

" His fate was pitied. Him in iron case  
(Reader, forgive the intolerable thought)  
They hung not :—no one on *his* form or face  
Could gaze, as on a show by idlers sought ;  
No kindred sufferer, to his death-place brought  
By lawless curiosity or chance,  
When into storm the evening sky is wrought,  
Upon his swinging corse an eye can glance,  
And drop, as he once dropped, in miserable trance."

Of the second poem, the tragedy of the 'Borderers,' written in 1795–6, we must needs give a briefer account, nor indeed does it contain those verbal peculiarities which rendered frequent quotation necessary to give a true idea of the former poem.

The principal characters of the drama are Marmaduke, Oswald, the Baron Herbert and his daughter, Idonea ; the rest are of secondary importance. The scene is laid in the reign of Henry III., a time chosen, we conclude, to gain historical connivance to a story which contains a dispossessed baron, an organized band of borderers, and other ingredients of a troublous period. Beyond this use, however, it is entirely disregarded : almost every one of the characters is as modern as the language they speak. Oswald, who is properly the principal personage, being the prime mover of the whole action, is a member of a band of borderers. In his youth this man had been brought by deception to commit a horrible murder, and resisting from his native strength of character the remorse which was oppressing him, had succeeded in reasoning it (and of course all other natural emotions with it) away. In this state of "devil's freedom" we find him at the opening of the drama—a member of the company from which the play derives its name. Of this band, Marmaduke, a young man of frank and ardent character, is chosen chief, and thus becomes an object of dislike and jealousy to Oswald, who has no taste for his good qualities and despises his weakness.

unsuspicious of his share in the event, she flies to Marmaduke, whom she had long loved in a quiet way as her protector and her only friend. He then informs her that he knows who caused her father's death, and she curses the man who could do so cruel a deed. Marmaduke tells her that it was himself.

Meanwhile Oswald's device has in fact become known by the confession of a vagrant whom he had bribed to represent Idonea's mother, and one of the band stabs him. Marmaduke, after a mild reproof—"A rash deed!" resigns his station as chief, commends the senseless Idonea to an old servant, and departs, declaring himself a wanderer till Heaven will let him die.

We have now before us sketches of the two Stories, we may therefore make some remarks upon them, and endeavour to show how they justify the title of 'Educational,' which we have applied to the period of Mr. Wordsworth's life in which they were composed.

And first of the tale. It is here—in a poem, that is, commenced in 1793, Mr. Wordsworth's twenty-fourth year—that we first find his well-known poetical theory in action, and we may discern, as well from other circumstances as most decisively from the difference this poem presents to its predecessors of only a year or so earlier, that it was then new. The difference is indeed most striking. In his former pieces we had plentiful personifications; "the half-seen Form of Twilight roams astray," "Desolation stalks afraid;" "Content," "Independence," "Despair," and the rest of the mythology of the eighteenth century, are nearly as familiar to Mr. Wordsworth as to Gray or Collins. But here we have a new world indeed; and if the other was a world of gas-light, this may be compared to the chill bleak light of a snowy dawn. A prominent article of the theory was the use of the actual language of men, "purified," that is, "from all rational causes of dislike or disgust." This principle, which, as most of our readers will remember, has been ably combated by Coleridge in his 'Biographia Literaria,' is one of those fallacies which perhaps only philosophers can refute, but which every one can feel. Accordingly in no point did Mr. Wordsworth come into more direct collision with the public feeling. Our younger readers often, we believe, feel some astonishment at the dislike

which the polished critics of that time manifested to a poet whom all now admire; but the truth is, that almost all the passages which furnished them with their triumphant accusations of meanness and vulgarity have been gradually replaced or altered. Who remembers now, that the blind boy, who sails so poetically in his turtle-shell, made his first expedition in

“ A household tub, like one of those  
Which women use to wash their clothes? ”

Who again recollects that “ We are seven ” began

“ A simple child, dear brother Jim ”—

or remembers the descriptions of dress and other such circumstances which are now recalled to mind by the two concluding lines of stanza i. (quoted above) of the present poem? Of the faults of this nature, which ‘ Guilt and Sorrow ’ once exhibited, there can be no doubt that many must have disappeared under that unsparing hand of correction and alteration which this poet is known to exercise, and to which this particular piece has now been lying subject for fifty years. Yet we have quoted many passages in our abstract which could no more proceed from Mr. Wordsworth’s writing now than the first lisp of the child can be recovered by the man. There is one remarkable instance of his fearless carrying out of the principle we have mentioned in the present poem, surely sufficient to convince himself that the natural language of men, even on “ extraordinary occasions,” is not sufficient for the purpose of “ giving immediate pleasure to a human being,” under which necessity Mr. Wordsworth confesses the poet to lie. We allude to stanza liv., which we must quote again.

“ His voice with indignation rising high  
Such further deed in manhood’s name forbade;  
The peasant, wild in passion, made reply  
With bitter insult and revilings sad;  
*Asked him in scorn, What business there he had;  
What kind of plunder he was hunting now;  
The gallows would of him one day be glad.* ”

Here, if the first four lines, which certainly cannot claim the defence of being natural language, are extremely bad, the three next, which undeniably are as natural as it is possible to conceive, seem to us to be far worse.

But the educational character of this period, which is shown in this baldness and awkwardness of composition, is evidenced still more decisively, we conceive, in the nature of the incidents chosen and the manner in which they are treated. The theory itself appears to have been the fruit of the first burst of real thought in the young poet—thought, which, meeting with less passion in his nature than in that of most men, or at least most poets of that age, became almost at once conscious philosophical reflection. Not so much then in that *feeling* of power, which is the impulsive principle with most young men of genius, as in the *knowledge* of it, Wordsworth set forth on his journey to the heights of Parnassus; and far from the improvidence of too many travellers on that road, he not only provides his compass and map, but before he actually sets off he obliges himself to practise diligently all the arts which so great an undertaking will be likely to require. Like a man who should have to accomplish some perilous feat of the mountains, he is out early and late, accustoming his eye to distinguish objects in the different lights of day and night, steadying his head by surveying precipices and chasms, and assuring his foot by practice of difficult passages. Daring the deepest recesses of our nature with an audacity drawn in great measure probably from the consciousness that he was only experimentalizing, he chooses for his heroes in both these cases characters which even the metaphysical analyst can only regard without feelings of distress, when the professional has overcome the natural and healthy taste. In the one case, scenes of the utmost wretchedness, murder, desolation, brutality, death from want and misery, relieved with that dismal light, the consolation of the hero's being *only* hanged; in the other, a minutely-realised picture of the most fearful disease that human nature has ever exhibited, the less distressing portions of the picture exhibiting the weak and well-meaning overcome by the strong and bad, the helpless and good starved to death, the innocent defrauded of happiness for life, and positively the brightest incident of all being the murder upon the stage of the causer of all these horrors. Surely we are comforted to think that Mr. Wordsworth had to take fifty years before he could overcome his scruples at the exhibition of such frightful and unalleviated miseries;

very great power. Some of the sophistries of Oswald are put with great force, and many of the minor incidents excellently imagined. Of these we would remark, Marmaduke's notice of the old man's shaking (Act II. Sc. 1.) and Oswald's exclamation

“ Ha! speak! What thing art thou? ”

immediately after his free-thinking soliloquy. The whole of the following dialogue we think as fine as it could be made; it takes place when Oswald meets Marmaduke, who has just left the old man to his fate on the desolate moor.

“ MARMADUKE (*alone*).

Deep, deep and vast, vast beyond human thought,  
Yet calm.—I could believe, that there was here  
The only quiet heart on earth. In terror,  
Remember'd terror, there is peace and rest.

*Enter* OSWALD.

OSWALD.

Ha! my dear Captain.

MARMADUKE.

A later meeting, Oswald,  
Would have been better timed.

OSWALD.

Alone, I see;  
You have done your duty. I had hopes, which now  
I feel that you will justify.

MARMADUKE.

I had fears,  
From which I have freed myself—but 't is my wish  
To be alone, and therefore we must part.

OSWALD.

Nay, then—I am mistaken. There 's a weakness  
About you still; you talk of solitude—  
I am your friend.

MARMADUKE.

What need of this assurance  
At any time? and why given now?

OSWALD.

Because  
You are now in truth my Master; you have taught me  
What there is not another living man  
Had strength to teach;—and therefore gratitude  
Is bold, and would relieve itself by praise.

MARMADUKE.

Wherefore press this on me?

The prey or masters of our own past deeds.  
Fellowship we *must* have, willing or no ;  
And if good angels fail, slack in their duty,  
Substitutes, turn our faces where we may,  
Are still forthcoming ; some which, though they bear  
Ill names, can render no ill services,  
In recompense for what themselves required.  
So meet extremes in this mysterious world,  
And opposites thus melt into each other.

MARMADUKE.

Time, since man first drew breath, has never moved  
With such a weight upon his wings as now ;  
But they will soon be lightened.

OSWALD.

Ay, look up—  
Cast round you your mind's eye, and you will learn  
Fortitude is the child of Enterprise ;  
Great actions move our admiration, chiefly  
Because they carry in themselves an earnest  
That we can suffer greatly.

MARMADUKE.

Very true.

OSWALD.

Action is transitory—a step, a blow,  
The motion of a muscle—this way or that—  
'T is done, and in the after vacancy  
We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed :  
Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,  
And shares the nature of infinity.

MARMADUKE.

Truth—and I feel it.

OSWALD.

What ! if you had bid  
Eternal farewell to unmingled joy  
And the light dancing of the thoughtless heart ;  
It is the toy of fools, and little fit  
For such a world as this. The wise abjure  
All thoughts whose idle composition lives  
In the entire forgetfulness of pain.  
—I see I have disturbed you.

MARMADUKE.

By no means.

OSWALD.

Compassion !—pity !—pride can do without them ;  
And what if you should never know them more ?  
He is a puny soul, who, feeling pain,  
Finds ease because another feels it too.  
If e'er I open out this heart of mine

seem only put in, like the back figures of a sketch, to make the two prominent ones intelligible, or else he fell here into that common error of persons of undramatic mind who attempt this kind of composition, the mistake of making the characters no more than that which their *persona* demands. No man, however fond of his children, is *only* a father, nor is any woman, however devoted to her parents, *only* a daughter. If this were a true play, the whole interest would depend on the sympathy which these two characters excited. As it is, it remains an important fault that we should be left without any counteracting sympathy with the good and innocent concerned—for sympathy with such mere spectra is out of the question—to the uninterrupted contemplation of the moral weakness of Marmaduke and the diabolical malignity of the God-deserted Oswald. Thus much for the Educational Period of Mr. Wordsworth's life and the greater part of the present volume.

But with the year 1798 commences the true harvest of this poet's genius—what we have called, to distinguish it from that which follows, the Poetic Period. Rich indeed was this ! within the next six years, *i. e.* between 1798 and 1803 inclusive, was composed almost every one of those darling poems, which we venture to prophesy will be treasured safely by love and admiration, whatever becomes of those of greater pretension and possibly of deeper but not such perfect beauty.

“Non satis est pulchra esse poemata : *dulcia sunt*,” is what we have too often to feel in Mr. Wordsworth's works ; but in this period they are often *dulcia*—of a persuasive sweetness indeed almost unequalled in English poetry—at any rate since Shakspeare, or shall we say Herrick ? Poems, spontaneous as the songs of Burns, finished as those of Horace, worthy of Shakspeare in their grace and tenderness and philosophical insight, and in their peculiar tone of thought and language entirely original, were poured forth at this time, if not in profusion, with a copiousness which bespoke a “well-spring.” It would be too much to say that all the productions of this period can claim praise like this, yet it is remarkable that scarcely any one is entirely deficient in that tenderness and loveliness which gives his gems their greatest charm.

entitled 'The Forsaken,' which looks like an excluded portion of the 'Affliction of Margaret,' is too short to produce the required effect. One or two new poems on the subject of Matthew are inferior to those we had by a great deal. But the following and another, upon the grave of Burns, are very spirited, and though in parts obscure, very beautiful.

" AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS.—1803.

" I shiver, Spirit fierce and bold,  
At thought of what I now behold :  
As vapours breathed from dungeons cold  
Strike pleasure dead,  
So sadness comes from out the mould  
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,  
And thou forbidden to appear ?  
As if it were thyself that 's here,  
I shrink with pain ;  
And both my wishes and my fear  
Alike are vain.

Off, weight—nor press on weight!—away,  
Dark thoughts!—they came, but not to stay ;  
With chastened feelings would I pay  
The tribute due  
To him, and aught that hides his clay  
From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth  
He sang, his genius " glinted " forth,  
Rose like a star that touching earth,  
For so it seems,  
Doth glorify its humble birth  
With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,  
The struggling heart, where be they now ?—  
Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,  
The prompt, the brave,  
Slept, with the obscurest, in the low  
And silent grave.

Well might I mourn that He was gone  
Whose light I hailed when first it shone ;  
When, breaking forth as Nature's own,  
It showed my youth  
How Verse may build a princely throne  
On humble truth.

Music that sorrow comes not near,  
A ritual hymn,  
Chaunted in love that casts out fear  
By Seraphim."

We have too soon ended the poetical and enter on the philosophical portion of this poet's life, which we should extend from about 1803 to the present time. In the 'Ode on the Intimations of Immortality,' while there still remains much of the divine inspiration, there are noticeable also the first stirrings of a change of spirit—an effort and constraint arising from the presence in the poet's mind of a new and unmastered element—visible even, at the first appearance of the poem, in an awkwardness of language and metre which has since been in great measure smoothed away. Here we have the second awakening of the poet into the philosopher—the unconscious or semi-conscious philosopher into the conscious one;—a change of grievous import in a nature where, as in this poet's, there was so little of human passion to subordinate the intellectual to the sensuous, the complex to the simple, the spiritual to the passionate. In a man of warmer animal temperament either the change could not have taken place, or the excitement under which he would have composed would have prevented the evil consequence from being so visible on his poems,—would, at least for the time, have re-embodied the philosopher in the poet. With Mr. Wordsworth himself in earlier youth this, as we have seen, had been the case, and the new element, though obtrusive for awhile, had been gradually fused by the ardour of youthful sympathies with men and nature into that pure and genuine vein of poetry which so enriched our literature. But now it seems as if that ardour was declining, and, unable to recover his former freedom, he strove for a new kind of liberty. A very considerable change came over his whole style, and his manner of writing underwent an alteration as great as his manner of thinking. As the consciousness which now insinuated itself into his compositions destroyed their grace, he seems to have endeavoured to regain his lost satisfaction by elaboration of the verse and expression,—to supply beauty which could be *felt* by beauty which could be *proved* and *demonstrated*. The Theory might have done good service now, but in the confi-

We may here take up again and conclude our notice of the present volume. Of the poems which we have not already mentioned the greater part fall within this period, and as they belong chiefly to its latter years, they exhibit strongly its characteristic marks. Elaboration is evident in every line,—every composition betrays an intimate acquaintance with the art of weaving words. The blank verse especially, while yet far removed from that exquisite and truly original melody of the ‘Tintern Abbey’ and parts of the ‘Poems on the Naming of Places,’ is in another style extremely beautiful. The following piece, however, we quote less for its metrical than its other attractions.

“ ADDRESS TO THE CLOUDS.

“ Army of Clouds ! ye winged host in troops  
Ascending from behind the motionless brow  
Of that tall rock, as from a hidden world,  
O whither with such eagerness of speed ?  
What seek ye, or what shun ye ? of the gale  
Companions, fear ye to be left behind,  
Or racing o’er your blue ethereal field  
Contend ye with each other ? of the sea  
Children, thus post ye over vale and height  
To sink upon your mother’s lap—and rest ?  
Or were ye rightlier hailed, when first mine eyes  
Beheld in your impetuous march the likeness  
Of a wide army pressing on to meet  
Or overtake some unknown enemy ?—  
But your smooth motions suit a peaceful aim ;  
And Fancy, not less aptly pleased, compares  
Your squadrons to an endless flight of birds  
Aërial, upon due migration bound  
To milder climes ; or rather do ye urge  
In caravan your hasty pilgrimage  
To pause at last on more aspiring heights  
Than these, and utter your devotion there  
With thunderous voice ? Or are ye jubilant,  
And would ye, tracking your proud lord the Sun,  
Be present at his setting ; or the pomp  
Of Persian mornings would ye fill, and stand  
Poising your splendours high above the heads  
Of worshippers kneeling to their up-risen God ?  
Whence, whence, ye Clouds ! this eagerness of speed ?  
Speak, silent creatures !—They are gone, are fled,  
Buried together in yon gloomy mass

Ye are their perilous offspring ; and the Sun—  
Source inexhaustible of life and joy,  
And type of man's far-darting reason, therefore  
In old time worshipped as the god of verse,  
A blazing intellectual deity—  
Loves his own glory in their looks, and showers  
Upon that unsubstantial brotherhood  
Visions with all but beatific light  
Enriched—too transient were they not renewed  
From age to age, and did not, while we gaze  
In silent rapture, credulous desire,  
Nourish the hope that memory lacks not power  
To keep the treasure unimpaired. Vain thought !  
Yet why repine, created as we are  
For joy and rest, albeit to find them only  
Lodged in the bosom of eternal things ? ”

A piece entitled ‘The Cuckoo at Laverna,’ one of a series of memorials of an Italian tour in 1837, also seems to us very delightful ; and the ‘Norman Boy,’ with its sequel, if still, like the rest, devoid of the pure and Grecian grace of his earlier years, have a touching beauty of their own. But three of the sonnets appear to us really to claim admission among his masterpieces ; and if the reader desire to be satisfied about what we have said of the difference between Wordsworth writing from the Affections and Wordsworth setting himself a task, we would desire them to compare these following with the series on the ‘Punishment of Death.’

## XII.

“ Lo ! where she stands fixed in a saint-like trance,  
One upward hand, as if she needed rest  
From rapture, lying softly on her breast !  
Nor wants her eyeball an ethereal glance ;  
But not the less—nay more—that countenance,  
While thus illumined, tells of painful strife  
For a sick heart made weary of this life  
By love, long crossed with adverse circumstance.  
—Would she were now as when she hoped to pass  
At God's appointed hour to them who tread  
Heaven's sapphire pavement, yet breathed well content,  
Well pleased, her foot should print earth's common grass,  
Lived thankful for day's light, for daily bread,  
For health, and time in obvious duty spent.”

But we relinquish the last opportunity perhaps which Mr. Wordsworth may afford us, without giving vent to the general reflections which a publication from him at his age suggests.

The love of universality is one of the most obvious characteristics of the present day. Cecil—not the statesman nor the clergyman, but the coxcomb—tells us, in one of those flashes of thought which so brilliantly illuminate his Autobiography, that it is all a mistake to suppose those to be the great men of the world whom we have always been admiring: such men, according to him, are those who either possessed powers only capable of one direction, or subjected by force of will a more universal capacity to a single object. The *real* great men are not, he considers, the Homers, Miltons, Shakspeares, etc., but persons like himself, who are never heard of except by some such fortunate circumstances as have secured to the world his own history; their merit and their misfortune being, that being able to do all things equally well, no sufficiently salient point is left for Fame to take hold of. This doctrine is found much beyond the range of the novels: who has forgotten that brightest sally of the Bar, when on Lord Brougham's becoming chancellor it was said, "Well, if Lord Brougham knew only a little law, he would know a little of everything"?

Now it is well to have universalists, but in an age of universalism it is of the *utmost* importance to have specialists. This is a general truth and would at any time make the example of a man who, with a consistency and success like Mr. Wordsworth's, has devoted himself to one object, a most important benefit. But in a time when the doctrine in question has produced a very decided and evil influence on the generation which has grown up under its reign, when our liberality has so often become indifference, our cosmopolitism destroyed our patriotism, our generalization injured our investigation and analysis, then almost our only hope lies in the eminence of the exceptions. Such an exception to the prevalent character is Mr. Wordsworth. Whatever his faults may be, they are the opposite ones to those of his age; and whatever his excellences, they spring from an individuality least to be expected in the circumstances of his time. He has always



25-

Wendworth

# Wordsworth

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*W. C. L.*

P.T.O.

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W. G. S.

On the early poetical life of Coleridge and Wordsworth Joseph Cottle is *the* authority; their life at Stowey and Alfoxden in 1797-8 is better known from his "Early Recollections" than from any other source. To their faithful publisher we are indebted for the likenesses of the poets at this period, and, although we have no direct evidence of this first portrait of Wordsworth having been done for Cottle, yet it was in his possession. In his "Early Recollections" vol. I., 317, as a note to Coleridge's "The picture shall be sent," he adds "A portrait of Mr. Wordsworth, correctly and beautifully executed, by an artist then at Stowey. No. 5." In Cottle's list of portraits "No. 5" is "A half-length ditto, 14 inches by 10, 1797, of W. Wordsworth." The name of the artist appears to have been unknown to Cottle, but the picture is signed and dated. In Dorothy Wordsworth's "Alfoxden Journal" the following passages are found:—"April 26th.—William went to have his picture taken." "May 6th, Sunday.—Expected the painter, and Coleridge."

Excepting the small and well-known profile by Hancock, now in the National Portrait Gallery, there is no other portrait of the poet at this interesting period.

That this was a most faithful likeness of the author of "Lyrical Ballads" at the time of the issue of that epoch-making book is certain; it fully confirms Hazlitt's word-picture "There is a severe, worn presence of thought about the temples, a fire in his eye (as if he saw something in objects more than the outward appearance), an intense, high, narrow forehead, a Roman nose, cheeks furrowed by strong purpose and feeling, and a convulsive inclination to laughter about the mouth, a good deal at variance with the solemn, stately expression of the rest of his face."

[P.T.O.]





Vaughan



schools, because the business of the schools is so to establish morality that it cannot be overthrown by evil circumstances in after life. For, as has already been pointed out, the church and the home of the present day are not able to perform this work, and therefore the schools, because of the very idea which underlies their foundation and secures their continued support, and because of the amount of time which the child necessarily spends in them, must be held largely responsible for the foundation of character; in other words, for the training of upright and patriotic citizens. This, as has just been said, is their *business*. School boards and teachers are needed who realize this important fact, and who are willing and able to make the development of principle the central point in their work.

No one who examines carefully the present political and social order can fail to notice that there is a spirit of self-seeking abroad that is destructive of the noblest virtues and the highest ethical conditions; that vast numbers of citizens are controlled by the passion for getting rather than for giving. This is the dan-

gerous element in the social problem. It is the bane of that partisanship that is ever willing to sacrifice the state for party supremacy; it is the moral obliquity of the pauper and the criminal, who are ever seeking to get something without rendering a fair and just equivalent. Is the public school laying its foundation deep enough? Has it struck its roots into the moral nature of these thirteen million children? These are the questions that serious and earnest people are asking. There is a striking similarity between the excellencies in our national life and the excellencies in our public school system. There is also a striking similarity between the evils in both. Can it not then be said that the eradication of the evils in the public schools will have very much to do with their eradication in the life of the state?

To touch the springs of action in these pupils is to touch the very sources of power in the national life; and there is no opportunity to be compared with that offered by the public schools. The institution is so sacred, so far reaching in its influence, that it must be rescued from political strife and partisan narrowness.

*William Frederick Slocum, Jr.*

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### HENRY VAUGHAN THE SILURIST.

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IN his own person Henry Vaughan left no trace in society. His life seemed to slip by like the running water on which he was forever gazing and moralizing, and his memory met early with the fate which he hardly foresaw. Descended from the royal chiefs of southern Wales, whom Tacitus mentions, and whose abode, in the day of Roman domination, was in the district called Siluria, he styled himself the Silurist upon his title-pages; and he keeps the distinctive name in the humblest of epitaphs, close by his lifelong home in the glorious valley of the

Usk and the little Honddu, under the shadow of Tretower, the ruined castle of his race, and of Pen-y-Fan and his kindred peaks. What we know of him is a sort of pastoral: how he was born, the son of a poor gentleman, in 1621, at Newton St. Bridget, in the old house yet asleep on the road between Brecon and Crickhowel; how he went up to Oxford, Laud's Oxford, with Thomas, his twin, as a boy of sixteen, to be entered at Jesus College; how he took his degree (just where and when no one can discover), and came back, after a London

revel, to be the village physician, though he was meant for the law, in what had become his brother's parish of Llansaint-fread; to write books full of sequestered beauty, to watch the most tragic of wars, to look into the faces of love and loss, and to spend his thoughtful age on the bowery banks of the river he had always known, his *Isca parens florum*, to which he consecrated many a sweet English line. And the ripple of the not unthankful Usk was "distinctly audible over its pebbles," as was the Tweed to the failing sense of Sir Walter Scott, in the room where Henry Vaughan drew his last breath, on St. George's Day, April 23, 1695. He died exactly seventy-nine years after Shakespeare, exactly one hundred and fifty-five years before Wordsworth.

Circumstances had their way with him as with most poets. He knew the touch of disappointment and renunciation not only in life, but in his civic hopes and in his art. He broke his career in twain, and began over, before he had passed thirty; and he showed great æsthetic discretion, as well as disinterestedness, in replacing his graceful early verses by the deep dedications of his prime. Religious faith and meditation seem so much a part of his innermost nature, it is a little difficult to remember that Vaughan considered himself a brand snatched from the burning, a lawless Cavalier brought by the best of chances to the quiet life, and the feet of the moral Muse. Some time between 1645 and 1653 he was seized by a sorely protracted and nearly fatal illness; and during its progress his dearest friends were taken from him. Nor was the execution of the king a light event to so sensitive a poet and so passionate a partisan. Meanwhile Vaughan read George Herbert, and his theory of proportional values began to change. It was a season of transition and silent crises, when men bared their breasts to great issues, and when it was easy for a childlike soul

Vaughan, in his new fervor, did his best to suppress the numbers written in his youth, thus clearing the field for what he afterwards called his "hagiography;" and a critic wonders what he found in his first tiny volume of 1646 or in *Olor Iscanus* to regret or cancel. The turn in his life which brought him lasting peace, in a world rocking between the cant of the Parliament and resurgent audacity and riot, achieved for us a body of work which, small as it is, has rare interest, and an out-of-door beauty, as of the natural dusk, "breathless with adoration," which is almost without parallel. Once he had shaken off secular ambitions, Vaughan's voice grew at once free and more forceful. In him a marked intellectual gain sprang from an apparently slight spiritual readjustment, even as it did, three centuries later, in one greater than he, John Henry Newman.

He was, in the only liberal sense, a learned man, full of lifelong curiosity for the fruit of the Eden Tree. His lines beginning,

"Quite spent with thought I left my cell," show the acutest thirst for hidden knowledge; he would "most gladly die," if death might buy him intellectual growth. He looks forward to eternity as to the unsealing and disclosing of mysteries. He makes the soul sing joyously to the body:

"I that here saw darkly, in a glass,  
But mists and shadows pass,  
And by their own weak shine did search the  
springs  
And source of things,  
Shall, with inlighted rays,  
Pierce all their ways!"

His occupation as a resident physician must have fostered his fine eye and ear for the green earth, and furnished him, day by day, with musings in sylvan solitudes and rides abroad over the fresh hill-paths. The breath of the mountains is about his books. An early riser, he uttered a constant invocation to whoever would listen, that

"Weary of her vain search below, above,  
In the first ' the immortal Love."

"manna was not good  
After sun-rising; far-day sullies flowers."

He was hospitable on a limited income. His verses of invitation To his Retired Friend, which are not without their thrusts at passing events, have a classic jollity fit to remind the reader of Randolph's ringing ode to Master Anthony Stafford. Again and again Vaughan reiterates the Socratic song of content: that he has enough lands and money, that there are a thousand things he does not want, that he is blessed in what he has. All this does not prevent him from recording the phenomenal ebb tides of his purse, and from whimsically synthesizing on "the threadbare, goldless genealogie" of bards! No sour zealot in anything, he enjoyed an evening now and then at the Globe Tavern, in London, where he consumed his sack with relish, that he might be "possessor of more soul," and "after full cups have dreams poetical." But he was no lover of the town. Country life was his joy and pride; the only thing which seemed, in his own most vivid phrase, to "fill his breast with home." A literary acquaintance, one unrecognized N. W., congratulates Vaughan that he is able to "give his Muse the swing in an hereditary shade." He was an angler, need it be added? Nay, the autocrat of anglers, — he was a salmon-catcher.

The poets who did not fight for the king were commonly supposed to redeem their reputation by dying of grief, like Drummond of Hawthornden, at his overthrow. Yet Vaughan did not fight, and Vaughan did not die of grief. It is so sure that he suffered some privation, and it may be imprisonment, for his allegiance that shrewd guesses, before now, have equipped him, and placed him in the ranks of the losing cause, where he might have had choice company. His generous, erratic brother (an alchemist, an Orientalist, and a Rosicrucian, who was ejected from his vicarage in 1654, and died, either of the plague or of inhaling the fumes of a caldron, at Albury, in 1665, while the court was at Oxford) had been a recruit, and

a brave one. But Henry Vaughan explicitly tells us, in his *Ad Posteror*, and in a prayer in the second part of *Silex Scintillans*, that he had no personal share in the constitutional struggle, that he shed no blood. Again, he cries, in a third lyric, —

"O accept

Of his vowed heart, whom Thou hast kept  
From bloody men!"

This painstaking record of a fact by one so loyal as he goes far to prove, to an inductive mind not thoroughly familiar with his circumstances, that he considered war the worst of current evils, and was willing, for this first principle of his philosophy, to lay himself open to the charge, not indeed of cowardice (was he not a Vaughan?), but of lack of appreciation for the one romantic opportunity of his life. His withdrawal from the turmoil which so became his colleagues may be counted in with his known moral courage and right sentiment; and one's fancy is ready to fasten on Vaughan's sad neutrality the passionate "ingemination" for "peace, peace," which "took his sleep from him, and would shortly break his heart," such as Clarendon tells us of in his ever-beautiful passage touching the young Lord Falkland. But it is greatly to be feared that Vaughan, despite all the abstract reasoning which arrays itself against so babyish and barbarous a thing as a battle, would have swung himself into a saddle against the existing government as readily as any, had not "God's finger touched him." A comparison of dates will show that he was bedridden, while his hot heart was afield with the shouting gentlemen whom Mr. Browning heard in a vision: —

"King Charles! and who'll do him right, now?  
King Charles! and who's ripe for fight, now?  
Give a rouse: here's in Hell's despite, now.  
King Charles!"

This is the secret of Vaughan's blood-guiltlessness. Of course he thanked Heaven, after, that he was kept clean of carnage; he would have thanked Heaven

for anything that happened to him. It was providential that we of posterity lost a soldier in the Silurist, and gained a poet. As the great confusion cleared, his spirit cleared, too, and the Vaughan we know,

“Delicious, lusty, amiable, fair,”

comes in, like a protesting angel, with the Commonwealth. Perhaps he lived long enough to sum up the vanity of statecraft and the instability of public choice, driven from tyranny to license, from absolute monarchy to absolute anarchy, and to turn once more to his “loud brook’s incessant fall” as an object much worthier of a rational man’s regard. Born while James I. was vain-gloriously reigning, Henry Vaughan survived the Civil War, the two Protectorates, the orgies of the Restoration (which he did not fail to satirize), and the Revolution of “Meenie the daughter,” as the old Scots song slyly calls her. He had seen the Stuarts in and out, in and out again, and his seventy-four years, on-lookers at a tragedy, were not forced to sit through the dull Georgian farce which began almost as soon as his grave was green.

Moreover, he was thoroughly out of touch with his times. While all the world was either devil-may-care or Calvin-colored, he had for his characteristic a rapt, inexhaustible joy, buoying him up and sweeping him away. He might well have said, like Dr. Henry More, his twin’s rival and challenger in metaphysics, that he was “most of his time mad with pleasure.” While

“every burgess foots

The mortal pavement in eternal boots,”

Vaughan lay indolently along a bank, like a shepherd swain, pondering upon the brood of “green-heads” who denied miracles to have been or to be, and wishing the noisy passengers on the highways of life could be taught the value of

“A sweet self-privacy in a right soul.”

His mind turned to paradoxes and inverted meanings, and the analysis of his

own tenacious dreams, in an England of pikes and bludgeons, and hock carts and wassail cakes. All through his pages one can trace the affecting struggle between things desired and things forborne. It is only a brave philosopher who can afford to pen a stanza intimate as this:—

“O Thou who didst deny to me

The world’s adored felicity!

Keep still my weak eyes from the shine

Of those gay things which are not Thine.”

He had better possessions than glory under his hand in the health and peace of his middle age and in his cheerful home. He was twice married, and must have lost his first wife, nameless to us, but most tenderly mourned, in his twenty-ninth or thirtieth year. She seems to have been the mother of five of his six children. Vaughan was rich in friends. He had known Davenant and Cartwright, but it is quite characteristic of him that the two great authors to whom he was especially attached were Jonson and John Fletcher, both only a memory at the time of his first going to London. Of Randolph, Jonson’s strong “son,” who so beggared English literature by dying young in 1634, Vaughan sweetly says somewhere that he will hereafter

“Look for Randolph in those holy meads.”

Mention of his actual fellow-workers is very infrequent, nor does he mention the Shakespeare who had “dwelt on earth unguessed at,” and who is believed to have visited the estates of the Vaughans at Scethrog, and to have picked up the name of his merry fellow Puck from goblin traditions of the neighborhood.

While Henry Vaughan was preparing for publication the first half of *Silex Scintillans*, as the token of his arrested and uplifted youth, Rev. Mr. Thomas Vaughan, backed by a few other sanguine Oxonians, and disregarding of his twin’s exaggerated remorse for the fruits of his profaner years, brought out the “formerly written and newly named” *Olor Iscanus*, over the author’s head, in 1650, and gave to it a motto from the

Georgics. The preface is in Eugenius Philalethes' own gallant style, and offers a haughty commendation to "beauty from the light retired." Perhaps Vaughan's earliest and most partial editor felt, like Thoreau on a certain occasion, that it were well to make an extreme statement, if only so he might make an emphatic one. The clerical brother writes very much as Lord Edward Herbert might be supposed to write for George under like conditions, for he knew, according to an ancient adage, that there is great folly in pointing out the shortcomings of a work of art to eyes uneducated to its beauties. It was just as well to insist disproportionately upon the principle at stake, that Henry Vaughan's least book was unique and precious. He was not, like the majority of the happy lyrists of his time, a writer by accident; he was strictly a man of letters, and his sign manual is large and plain upon everything which bears his name. He indites like a Roman, with evenness, and without a superfluous syllable. One cannot italicize him; every word is a congested force, packed to bursting with meaning and insistence, — the utterance of a man who has been thinking all his life upon his own chosen subjects, and who unerringly dispatches a language about its business, as if he had just created it. Like Andrew Marvell's excellent father, "he never broached what he had never brewed." It follows that his work, to which second editions were well-nigh unknown, shows scarcely any variation from itself. It carries with it a testimony that, such as it stands, it is the very best its author can do. Its faults are not slips: they are quite as radical and congenital as its virtues. Vaughan (to transfer a fine phrase of Mr. W. T. Arnold) is "enamored of perfection," but he is fully so before he makes up his mind to write, and from the first every stroke of his pen is fatal. It transfixes a noun or a verb, pins it to the page, and challenges a reformer to move or replace it. His

modest Muse is as sure as Shakespeare, as nice as Pope; she is incapable of scruples and apprehensions once she has spoken. What Vaughan says of Cartwright may well be applied to his own deliberate grace of diction: —

"Thou thy thoughts hast drest in such a strain  
As doth not only speak, but rule and reign."

His verses have the tone of a Vandyck portrait, with all its firm, pensive elegance and lack of shadow. Those of Vaughan's figures not drawn from the open air, where he was happiest, are indeed too bold and too many, and they come from strange corners, from finance, medicine, mills, the nursery, and the mechanism of watches and clocks. In no one instance, however, does he start wrong, like the great influencer, Donne, in *The Valediction*, and finish by turning such impediments as "stiff twin-compasses" into images of memorable beauty. The *Encyclopædia Britannica*, like Campbell, finds Vaughan "untunable," and so he is very often. But poets who crowd their lines with thought do not always succeed in metaphysics and in music too. The lute which has the clearest and most enticing twang under the laurel boughs is Herrick's, and not Donne's; Mr. Swinburne's, and not Mr. Browning's. It is to be observed that when Vaughan lets go of his regrets, his advice, and his growls over the bad times, he falls into instant melody, as if in that, and not in a rough impressiveness, were his real strength. His blessing for the river Usk flows sweetly as the tide it hangs upon:

"Garlands, and songs, and roundelays,  
And dewy nights, and sunshine days,  
The turtle's voice joy without fear,  
Dwell on thy bosom all the year!  
To thee the wind from far shall bring  
The odors of the scattered spring,  
And, laden with the rich arrest,  
Spend it in spicy whispers here."

Vaughan played habitually with his pauses, and unconsciously threw the metrical stress on words least able to bear it; but no sensitive ear can be otherwise than

pleased at the broken sequence of such lines as,

"These birds of light make a land glad,  
Chirping their solemn matins on a tree,"

and

"As if his liquid loome retifus stayed  
Lingering, and were of this steep place  
afraid."

The word "perspective," which he introduced with the accent upon the first syllable, was a favorite with him; and Wordsworth thought well enough of that usage to employ it in the majestic opening of the sonnet on King's College Chapel.

Vaughan was a born observer, and in his poetry may be found the pioneer expression of the nineteenth-century feeling for landscape. His canvas is not often large; he had an indifference towards the exquisite presence of autumn, and an inland ignorance of the sea. But he could portray depth and distance at a stroke, as in the buoyant lines,

"It was high spring, and all the way  
Primrosed, and hung with shade,"

which etches for you the whole winding lane, roofed and floored with beauty; he carries a reader over half a continent in his

"Paths that are hidden from the vulture's eyes,"

and suspends him above man's planet altogether with his audacious eagle, which

"in the clear height and upmost air  
Doth face the sun, and his dispersed hair!"

That Vaughan's pages should furnish this patient specification of natural objects is remarkable in a man whose mind was set upon things invisible. His gaze is upon the remote inaccessible ether, but he seems to detect everything between himself and heaven. He sighs over the inattentive rustic, whom, perhaps, he catches scowling by the pasture bars of the wild Welsh downs:—

"O that he would hear  
The world read to him!"

Whatever is in that pleasant world he himself sees and hears; and his interrupted chronicle is always terse, graphic,

straight from life. He has the inevitable phrase for every phenomenon,—a little low-comedy phrase, sometimes, such as Carew had used before him:—

"Deep snow  
Candies our country's woody brow."

It seems never to have entered the primitive mind of Henry Vaughan to love, or serve, art and nature for themselves. His cue was to walk abroad circumspectly and with incessant reverence, because in all things he found God. His prayer is that he may not forget that physical beauty is a great symbol, but only a symbol; a "hid ascent" through "masks and shadows" to the divine; or, as Mr. Lowell said in one of his last poems,

"a tent  
Pitched for an inmate far more excellent."

Vaughan, a humanist of the school of Aësi, was full of out-of-door meeknesses and pieties, nowhere sweeter in their expression than in this all-embracing valedictory:—

"O knowing, glorious Spirit! when  
Thou shalt restore trees, beasts, and men,

Give him among Thy works a place  
Who in them loved and sought Thy face."

"I saw," he says suddenly,

"I saw Eternity the other night;"

and he is forever seeing things almost as startling and as bright: the "edges and the bordering light" of lost infancy; the processional grandeur of old books, which he fearlessly calls

"The track of fled souls, and their Milky Way;"

and visions of the Judgment, when

"from the right  
The white sheep pass into a whiter light."

Here the figure beautifully forecasts a famous one of Rossetti. Light, indeed, is Vaughan's distinctive word, and the favorite source of his similes and illustrations.

Vaughan's meek reputation began to renew itself about 1828, when four critics perfectly fitted to appraise his worth were in their prime; but, curiously enough, none of these, not even the best

of them, the same Charles Lamb who said a just and generous word for Wither, had the satisfaction of rescuing his sunken name. Eight little books inclose all of the Silurist's work. He began to publish in 1646, and he practically ceased in 1655, breaking his after-silence but twice, — with *Thalia Rediviva* in 1678, and a translation of Nieremberg's *Meditations* in 1682. It is commonly supposed that his verses were forgotten up to the date, 1847, of the faulty edition of the Rev. H. F. Lyte, and until the appearance of Dr. Grosart's inestimable quartos; but Mr. Carew Hazlitt has been fortunate enough to discover the advertisement of an eighteenth-century Vaughan reprint. As the results of Dr. Grosart's patient service to our elder choir are necessarily semi-private, it may be said with truth that the real Vaughan is still debarred from the general reader, who is, indeed, the identical person least concerned about that state of affairs. His name is not irrecoverable nor unfamiliar to scholars. His mind, on the whole, might pass for the product of yesterday; and he, who needs no glossary, may handsomely cede the honors of one to Mr. William Morris. It is at least certain that had Vaughan lately lifted up his unique and sylvan voice out of Brecknockshire, he would not so readily be accused of having modeled himself unduly upon George Herbert. He has gone into eclipse behind that gracious name.

Henry Vaughan was a child of thirteen when Herbert, a stranger to him, died at Bemerton, and he read him first in the sick-chamber to which the five years' distresses of his early manhood confined him. The reading could not have been prior to 1647, for *Olor Iscanus*, Vaughan's second volume, was lying ready for the press that year, as we know from the date of its dedication to Lord Kildare Digby. As no novice poet, therefore, he fell under the spell of a sweet and elect soul, who was also a lover of vanquished royalty, a convert who had

looked upon the vanities of the court and the city, a Welshman born, and not unconnected with Vaughan's own ancient and patrician house. These were slight coincidences, but they served to strengthen a forming tie. The Silurist somewhere thanks Herbert's "holy ever-living lines" for checking his blood, and it was perhaps the only service rendered of which he was conscious. But his endless iambics and his vague allegorical titles are cast thoroughly in the manner of Herbert, and he takes from the same source the heaped categorical epithets, the didactic tone, and the introspectiveness which are his most obvious failings. Vaughan's intellectual debt to Herbert resolves itself into somewhat less than nothing; for in following him with zeal to the Missionary College of the Muses he lost rather than gained, and he is altogether delightful and persuasive only where he is altogether himself. Nevertheless, a certain spirit of conformity and filial piety towards Herbert has betrayed Vaughan into frequent and flagrant imitations. It seems as if these must have been voluntary, and rooted in an intention to enforce the same truths in all but the same words; for the moment Vaughan breaks into invective, or comes upon his distinctive topics, such as childhood, natural beauty (for which Herbert had an imperfect sense), friendship, early death, spiritual expectation, he is off and away, free of any predecessor, as his thrilling and unforgettable self. There was, indeed, in English letters, up to Queen Anne's reign, an open communion of ideas and idioms astonishing to look upon; there is less confiscation at present, because, outside the pale of the sciences, there is less thinking. If any one thing can be closer to another than even Drummond's sonnet on Sleep is to Sidney's, it is the dress of Vaughan's morality to that of George Herbert's. Mr. Simcox is the only critic who has taken the trouble to contrast them, and he does so in so random a fashion as to

suggest that his scrutiny, in some cases, has been confined to the rival titles. It is certain that no other mind, however bent upon identifications, can find a likeness between *The Quip* and *The Queer*, or between *The Tempest* and *Providence*. Vaughan's *Mutiny*, like *The Collar*, ends in a use of the word "child," after a scene of strife; and if ever it were meant to match Herbert's poem, distinctly falls behind it, and deals, besides, with a much weaker rebelliousness. *Rules and Lessons* is so unmistakably modeled upon

HERBERT.

"A throbbing conscience, spurred by remorse,  
Hath a strange force."

"My thoughts are all a case of knives,  
Wounding my heart  
With scattered smart."

"And trust  
Half that we have  
Unto an honest faithful grave."

"Teach me Thy love to know,  
That this new light which now I see  
May both the work and workman show:  
Then by a sunbeam I will climb to Thee!"

"I will go searching, till I find a sun  
Shall stay till we have done,  
A willing shiner, that will shine as gladly  
As frost-nipt suns look sadly.  
Then we will sing and shine all our own day,  
And one another pay:  
His beams shall cheer my breast, and both  
so twine  
Till even his beams sing, and my music shine."

(Of prayer)

"Heaven in ordinary, man well-drest,  
The Milky Way, the bird of Paradise."

"Then went I to a garden, and did spy  
A gallant flower,  
The crown-imperial sure, said I.  
Peace at the root must dwell."

"But groans are quick and full of wings.  
And all their motions upward be,  
And ever as they mount, like larks they sing:  
The note is sad, yet music for a king."

"Joys oft are there, and griefs as oft as joys,  
But griefs without a noise;  
Yet speak they louder than distempered fears:  
What is so shrill as silent tears?"

*The Church Porch* that it scarcely calls for comment. Herbert's admonitions, however, are continued, but nowhere repeated; and Vaughan's succeed in being poetic, which the others are not. Beyond these replicas Vaughan's structural genius is in no wise beholden to Herbert's. But numerous phrases and turns of thought descend from the master to the disciple, undergoing such subtle and peculiar changes that it may well be submitted whether, in this casual list, every borrowing, save two, be not a bettering.

VAUGHAN.

"A darting conscience, full of stabs and fears."

"And wrap us in imaginary flights  
Wide of a faithful grave."

"That in these masks and shadows I may see  
Thy sacred way,  
And by these hid ascents climb to that day  
Which breaks from Thee  
Who art in all things, though invisibly!"

"O would I were a bird or star  
Fluttering in woods, or lifted far  
Above this inn  
And road of sin!  
Then either star or bird would be  
Shining or singing still to Thee!"

(Of books.)

"The track of fled souls, and their Milky  
Way."

"I walked the other day to spend my hour  
Into a field,  
Where I sometime had seen the soil to yield  
A gallant flower."

"A silent tear can pierce Thy throne  
When loud joys want a wing;  
And sweeter airs stream from a groan  
Than any arted string."

"At first Thou gavest me milk and sweet-  
nesses,  
I had my wish and way;  
My days were strewed with flowers and hap-  
piness,  
There was no month but May."

"Only a scarf or glove  
Doth warm our hands, and make them write  
of Love."

"I got me flowers to strew Thy way.  
I got me boughs off many a tree,  
But thou wast up by break of day,  
And brought Thy sweets along with Thee."

"O come! for Thou dost know the way:  
Or if to me Thou wilt not move,  
Remove me where I need not say,  
'Drop from above.'"

"Sure Thou wilt joy by gaining me  
To fly home like a laden bee."

To arraign Vaughan is to vindicate him. In the too liberal courts of literature, an idea becomes the property of him who best expresses it. Herbert's odd and fresh metaphors, his homing bees and pricks of conscience and silent tears, the adoring star and his comrade bird, even his famous female scarf, go over bodily to the spoiler. In many an instance something involved and difficult still characterizes Herbert's diction; and it is diverting to watch how the interfering hand sorts and settles it at one touch, and sends it, as Mr. Arnold would say, to the "centre." Vaughan's mind, despite its mysticism, was full of dispatch and impetuosity. Like Herbert, he alludes to himself more than once as "fierce;" and the adjective undoubtedly belongs to him. There was in Vaughan, at his height, a rush and fire which Herbert never knew, a greater clarity and conciseness, a far greater restraint, a keener sense both of color and form, and so much more deference for what Mr. Ruskin calls "the peerage of words" that the younger man could never have been content to send forth a line which might mean its opposite, such as occurs in the fine stanza about

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"Follow the cry no more! There is  
An ancient way,  
All strewed with flowers and happiness,  
And fresh as May!"

"Feverish souls  
Sick with a scarf or glove."

"I'll get me up before the sun,  
I'll cull me boughs off many a tree;  
And all alone full early run  
To gather flowers and welcome Thee."

"Either disperse these mists, which blot and  
fill  
My perspective still as they pass,  
Or else remove me hence unto that hill  
Where I shall need no glass!"

"Thy grave, to which my thoughts shall move  
Like bees in storms unto their hive."

glory in the beautiful Quip. It is only on middle ground that the better poet and the better saint collide. Vaughan never could have written, —

"O that I once past changing were  
Fast in Thy Paradise, where no flower can  
wither!"

or the tranquil confession of faith, —

"Whether I fly with angels, fall with dust,  
Thy hands made both, and I am there:  
Thy power and love, my love and trust,  
Make one place everywhere!"

For his best is not Herbert's best, nor his worst Herbert's worst. It is not Vaughan who reminds us that "filth" lies under a fair face. He does the "fiercer" thing: he goes to the pit's mouth in a trance, and "hears them yell." Herbert's noblest and most winning art still has its stand upon the altar steps of The Temple; but Vaughan is always on the roof, under the stars, like a somnambulist, or actually above and out of sight, "pinnacled dim in the intense inane;" absorbed in larger and wilder things, and stretching the spirits of all who try to follow him. The homelier and more restful writer has had his reward in the world's lasting appreciation; and although Vaughan had a favorable

opinion of his own staying powers, nothing would have grieved him less than to step aside, if the choice had lain between him and his exemplar.

Vaughan, then, owes something to Herbert, although it was by no means the best which Herbert could give; but he himself is, what Herbert is not, an ancestor. He leans forward to touch Cowper and Keble; and Mr. Churton Collins has taken the pains to trace him in Tennyson.

The angels who

"familiarily confer  
Beneath the oak and juniper,"

invoke an instant thought of the Milton of the *Allegro*; and the fragrant winds which linger by Usk, "loaden with the rich arrear," appear to be Milton's, too. His austere music first sounded in the public ear in 1645, one year before Vaughan, much his junior, began to print. It would seem very unlikely that a Welsh physician should be beholden to the close-kept manuscripts of the Puritan stripling at Cambridge and Horton; but it is interesting to find the prototype of Vaughan's charming lines about Rachel, the wife of Jacob,

"With native looks that knew no guile,  
Came the sheep-keeping Syrian maid,"

in the Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester, dating from 1631. Vaughan's dramatic Fleet Street,

"Where the loud whip and coach scolds all the way,"

might as well be Swift's; and his salutation to the lark,

"And now, as fresh and cheerful as the light,  
Thy little heart in early hymns doth sing,"

is like a quotation from some tender sonnet of Bowles, or from his admirer, the young Coleridge who instantly outstepped him. Olor, Silex, and Thalia establish unexpected relationships with genius the most remote from them and from each other. The animated melody of poor Rochester's best songs seems deflected from

"If I were dead and in my place,"

addressed to Amoret, in the *Poems* of 1646. The delicate simile,

"As some blind dial, when the day is done,  
Can tell us at midnight there was a sun,"

and

"But I am eadly loose and stray,  
A giddy blast each way.  
O let me not thus range:  
Thou canst not change!"

(a verse of a poem headed by an extract, in the *Vulgate*, from the eighth chapter of *Romans*), come home with a smile to the lover of Clough. Vaughan was that dangerous person, an original thinker; and the consequence is that he compromises a great many authors who may never have heard of him. It is admitted now that we owe to his prophetic lyre one of the boasts of modern literature. Dr. Grosart has handled so well the obvious debt of Wordsworth in *The Intimations of Immortality*, and has proven so conclusively that Vaughan figured in the library at Rydal Mount, that little need be said here on that theme. In *Corruption*, *Childhood*, *Looking Back*, and *The Retreat*, most markedly in the first, lie the whole point and pathos of

"Trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From Heaven, which is our home."

Few studies are more fascinating than that of the liquidation, so to speak, of Vaughan's brief, tense, impassioned monodies into "the mighty waters rolling evermore" of the great *Ode*. Yet it is no unpardonable heresy to be jealous that the "first sprightly runnings" of an English classic should not be better known, and to prefer their touching simplicity to the grandly adult and theory-burdened lines which everybody quotes.

Vaughan's elegies are so exquisite and endearing, they haunt one with the conviction that they stop short of immortality, not because their author had too little skill, but because, between his repressed speech and his extreme emotions, no art could make out to live. He had a deep heart, such as deep hearts will always recognize and reverence:—

"And thy two wings were grief and love." His thoughts jostle him hard at all times; but in the face of eternity he seems so to accord with the event which all but destroys him that sorrow inexpressible becomes suddenly unexpressed, and his funeral music ends in a high enthusiasm and serenity open to no misconception. Distance, and the lapse of time, and his own utter reconciliation to the play of events make small difference in his utterance upon the old topic. The thought of his friend, forty years after, is the same mystical rapture:—

"O could I track them! but souls must  
Track one the other;  
And now the spirit, not the dust,  
Must be thy brother  
Yet I have one pearl by whose light  
All things I see,  
And in the heart of death and night  
Find Heaven and thee."

Daphnis, the eclogue to the memory of Thomas Vaughan, is the only one of these elegies which, possessing a surplus of beautiful lines, is not even in the least satisfying. "R. Hall," "no woollack soldier," who was slain at the siege of Pontefract, won from Henry Vaughan a passionate requiem, which opens with a gush of agony,—"I knew it would be thus!"—as affecting as anything in the early ballads; and the battle of Rowton Heath took from him "R. W.," the comrade of his youth. But it was in one who bore his sovereign's name (hitherto unidentified, although he is said to have been the subject of a "public sorrow") that Vaughan lost the friend upon whom his whole nature seemed to lean. The soldier-heart in himself spoke out firmly in the cry he consecrated To the Pious Memory of C. W. Its masculine dignity; the pride and soft triumph which it gathers about it, advancing the plain heroic ending which sweeps away all images of remoteness and night, in

"Good-morrow to dear Charles' for it is day," can be compared to nothing but a concord of mounting strings, slowing to

their major chord with a courage and cheer that bring tears to the eyes. Vaughan's tender threnodies would make a small but precious volume. To the Pious Memory, with Thou that Knowest for Whom I Mourn, Silence and Stealth of Days, I Walked the Other Day to Spend my Hour, The Morning Watch, and Beyond the Veil are alone enough to give him rank forever as a genius and a good man.

"C. W.'s" death was one of the things which turned him from temporal pursuits and pleasures,

"Home from their dust to empty his own glass."

His thoughts centred henceforward, in their full intensity, on the supernatural world; nay, if he were irremediably depressed, not only on the persistence of resolved matter, by means of which buried men come forth again in the color of flowers and the fragrance of the wind, but even on the physical damp and dark which confine our mortality. It is the poet of dawn and of crisp mountain air who can pack horror on horror into his nervous quatrains about Death:—

"A nest of nights, a gloomy sphere  
Where shadows thicken, and the cloud  
Sits on the sun's brow all the year,  
And nothing moves without a shroud."

This is masterly; but here again there is reserve, the curbing hand of a man who holds, with Plato, a willful indulgence in the "realism" of sadness to be an actual crime. Vaughan's dead dwell, indeed, as his own mind does, in "the world of light."

Chambers' Encyclopædia made an epic blunder, long ago, when it ascribed to this gentlest of Anglicans a "gloomy sectarianism." He, of all religious poets, makes the most charming secular reading, and may well be a favorite with the heathen for whom Herbert is too decorative, Crashaw too hectic and intense, Cowper too fearful, and Faber too fluent. *Lyræ Apostolica* a treatise, though a glo-

rious one, on Things which Must be Revived, and Hymns Ancient and Modern an exceeding weariness to the spirit. It is a saw of Dr. Johnson's that it is difficult for theology to clothe itself in attractive numbers; but then Dr. Johnson was ignorant of Vaughan. It is not in human nature to refuse to cherish the "holy, happy, healthy Heaven" which he has left us (in a graded alliteration which smacks of the physician rather than of the "gloomy sectarian"), his very social "angels talking to a man," and his bright saints hovering and smiling nigh, who

"are indeed our pillar-fires  
Seen as we go;  
They are the city's shining spires  
We travel to."

All this liberal sweetness and charity heighten Vaughan's poetic quality, as they deepen the impression of his prac-

tical Christianity. The nimbus is about his laic songs. When he talks affectionately of moss and rocks or of dumb animals, it is as if they were incorporated into the ritual. He has the genius of prayer, and may be recognized by "those graces which walk in a veil and a silence." He is full of distinction, and of a sort of golden idiosyncrasy. Vaughan's true "note" is — Vaughan. To read him is like coming alone to a village churchyard with trees, where the west is dying in lilac and rose behind the low ivied Norman tower. The young choir is within, the south windows are open, and the organist, with many a hushed, unconventional interlude of his own, is rehearsing the psalm of "pleasures for evermore:"

"I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel. . . . I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."

*Louise Imogen Guiney.*

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## THE ENCYCLICALS OF POPE LEO XIII.

FROM the commencement of his pontificate Leo XIII. has evinced an anxious interest in the tendencies of his times. His exceptional powers of observation have been devoted to the social problems of this half-century with a solicitude which has seldom been surpassed.

The most perfect expression of his thoughts, the best evidence of the working of his mind, is to be found in the Encyclical Letters,<sup>1</sup> which are his principal literary achievements since coming to the throne. At the different periods of their appearance these letters have given rise to a variety of comments, but the commentators have been, for the most part, either unhesitatingly eulogistic because inspired by reverential feelings, or harshly critical from hostility to Catholic

doctrine or to received religion. Now, therefore, that the papal bullary forms a volume, it is opportune to examine it from an unsectarian point of view.

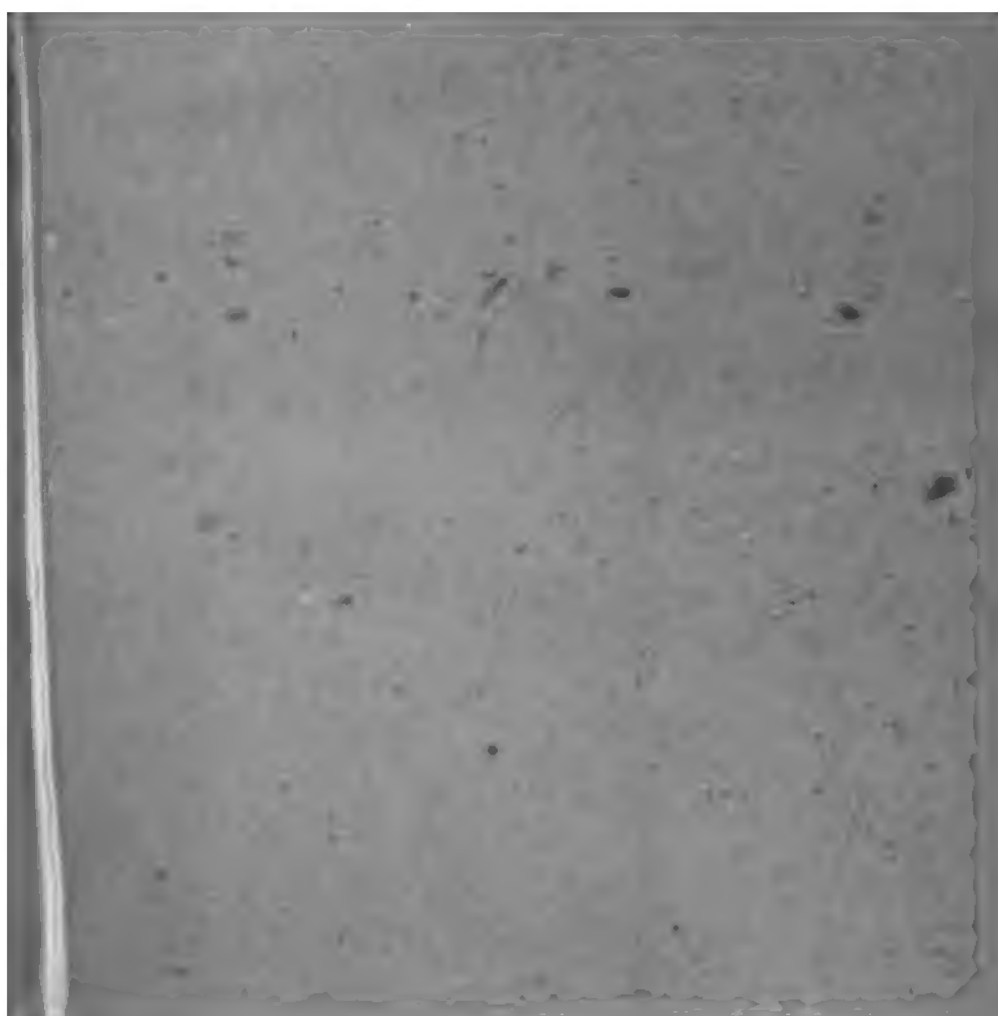
The Encyclicals embody the present sentiments of Catholicism towards passing events; in addition to which they are examples of theological reasoning and of modern Latinity. They are the voice of a voluntary prisoner who has sacrificed his liberty to the immutable principles of the great institution which he governs, and who, in the silence of his cabinet, views and judges by the standard of his faith the current of men's thoughts.

Each Encyclical which issues from the Vatican is an event in the life of the Church. The bishops to whom these letters are usually addressed find in them the keynote of their future teach-

<sup>1</sup> *Leonis XIII. Pontificis Maximi Epistolæ Encyclicæ, etc. Augustæ Taurinorum. 1892.*







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